

AUSTIN A. D'SOUZA

THE  
HUMAN  
FACTOR  
IN  
EDUCATION

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# THE HUMAN FACTOR IN EDUCATION

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*Foreword*

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*To  
Dawn Felicity  
who has done more  
to humanise the author and his views  
on education  
than all the books he has read.*



## ERRATA

- Page 8, line 16 from top, for *WCTS* read *WCTOP*  
Page 9, line 7 from bottom, for *recommending* read *remembering*  
Page 10, line 12 from top, delete period and for *He* read *he*  
Page 18, line 12 from top, for *teachers will* read *teachers well*  
Page 35, line 15 from top, for *2nd century* read *20th century*  
Page 61, line 7 from bottom, for *our* read *ex-*  
Page 62, line 5 from bottom, for *previous* read *later*  
Page 76, line 13 from bottom, for *philosopher* read *philosophy*  
Page 88, line 5 from bottom for *boom* read *form*  
Page 92, line 16 from top, delete *and*, then substitute *hyphen*  
for *dash*  
Page 92, line 18 from bottom, for *hetar* read *heart*  
Page 100, line 14 from top, for *disposition* read *despotism*  
Page 127, line 4 from bottom, for *large* read *later*  
Page 137, line 11 from top, for *centralised* read *decentralised*  
Page 174, line 17 from top, for *received* read *conceived*

## FOREWORD

No matter how ancient their cultural roots, all developing communities are passing through a technological revolution and are inevitably pressed to gear educational planning to their economic welfare. For we live in a world where it is both inevitable and right to use the resources of science and the machine to eliminate the dehumanizing plague of poverty. The danger of this situation lies in the ease with which our educational resources can become totally engaged in the achievement of economic objectives. Imperceptibly we tend to merge into an electronic world in which the computer and the machine, and maybe the nuclear bomb, not human intelligence and wisdom, decide our destiny. In this situation education becomes the servant solely of utilitarian purposes. This is true of all national communities, rich or poor. We are endangering the existence of human values implicit in our highest educational traditions, depriving them, to use Mr D' Souza's words, of 'the missing component of the heart'.

With this grim possibility in mind, readers of *The Human Factor in Education* will find in Mr D'Souza's book both a warning and the outlines of an opportunity. In reading its pages I have been impressed by the breadth of its scope, the universality of its application, the warm humanity of the author's outlook and the wisdom and practicality of his proposals. He reminds us that no one engaged at any point in the educational process can afford to neglect the human factor, that I-THOU relationship which gives life to any human institution. Whether at the administrative level of planning or in the intimate contracts within the school community, it is people who matter. It is so easy for the administrator to assume that by building schools he has created a humane and efficient system of education; so easy for the Head to assume that 'the Head-centred school', the totalitarian pyramid of descending ranks, is a viable educative society. To these outworn heresies the author opposes the view that the 'teacher-minded' administrator and the 'child-centred'



teacher are two sides of the same coin; and again, the view that the effective Head is a partner with his colleagues in the task of translating the highest human values into the intellectual, moral and physical fabric of the school's life.

The discerning reader will discover an impelling unity throughout this book; in the discussions on freedom, authority and responsibility, on the relation of school values to the formation of character, and in the author's insistence that education is not a two-dimensional exercise with books but an experience with hand, eye and brain in the three-dimensional world in which all children live. I found especially interesting the author's assessment of the problem of religious education in secular schools. Mr D'Souza writes with an intimate knowledge of school problems as they confront the teacher, and also with a compassionate understanding of the ultimate issue—that the aim of education is not to make gadgets but men. I commend this book to teachers, to parents and to those who plan education. All will profit from its wisdom.

E. B. CASTLE



## PREFACE

THE phenomenal development during the past half century of what may be broadly described as a science of education, replete with sophisticated measuring techniques and a specialised jargon modelled on those of the Natural sciences, has helped education to cut its leading strings from Metaphysics, to graduate as a field of study and research in its own right, and to take its place in the Universities of the world as one of the youngest, fastest growing and most popular of the Social sciences. There is, however, a reverse side to the medal; the scientific approach to education carried to extremes has tended to depersonalise and dehumanise the intrinsically human quality of education in all its many-sided facets. An excess of 'scientism' in education has, for instance, tempted educational administrators, at the prompting of politicians in a hurry, to use schools and other institutions of learning as instruments to train boys and girls to become efficient technicians, scientists, and other types of experts to serve the needs of a modern industrialised technological society, instead of whole men and women. Or, again, faced with the current knowledge explosion, there is a tendency for the ancient Greek ideal which, given a modern connotation is as valid today as it ever was, of a liberal education to be discarded in favour of a narrow and premature specialisation; for education to be identified, in practice if not a theory, with the training of the intellect to the neglect of the development of the body, the education of the emotions and the formation of character; for the imparting of knowledge and skills to completely overshadow the search for Wisdom, which Whitehead described as the art of the application of knowledge, the development of attitudes and inculcation of values; for educators to be obsessed with man and his adjustment to the material world, and to be blind to spiritual insights and inspirations, motivations and values.

The motto of Winchester, the oldest and one of the most famous English Public Schools, is "Manners (Morals),

Makyth to the Man" and the boys of the famous Manchester Grammar School at their daily Assembly pray for "godliness and good learning". The basic ideal underlying this motto and prayer inspired all that was best in ancient Indian education, both in the schools and in the institutions of higher learning; in our day, true to the spirit of the age, the Kothari Commission calls for education to be modernised and updated, science-based and productivity-centred so as to be in tune with the industrialised and technological age in which we live. It is true that the Commission, somewhat grudgingly, recognises that "modernisation does not mean—least of all our national situation—a refusal to recognise the importance of or to inculcate moral and spiritual values. Modernisation if it is to be a living force must derive its strength from the strength of the spirit". But the whole tenor of the Report and its primary stress is nevertheless on using education as an effective instrument for the production of the scientific and efficient man rather than the good man, on education as a means to earning a good living for the individual and the nation rather than helping men to live a good life.

It is salutary in such a time and age to hark back to the Greeks, and to the ancient wisdom of our land, so that we may find our bearings once again, and endeavour to put first things first. "The Greeks", according to Prof. E. B. Castle, "were superb artists and technicians and they founded the science of the West, but they resisted the dangerous doctrine that education was an instrument for the making of things rather than the rearing of children so that they became good men. This insistent theme that education is what makes a man, still defines our modern problem". The Greeks stressed the education of the whole man, and of his balanced and all-round development, physical, mental, moral and spiritual, both for his own good and for the good of the State. The same ideal dominates the best thinking of India's most eminent educational thinkers and philosophers, past and present, Mahatma Gandhi, Vivekananda, Tagore, Radhakrishnan and Zakir Hussain. The ultimate objective of Nai Talim was to produce a new man and a new society by developing and drawing out all facets of the young child's personality—physical, mental, emotional, moral and spiritual.

To Vivekananda education was Man-Making, and Tagore, Radhakrishnan and Zakir Hussain also stress that the development of the total human personality should be the primary objective of education. It is true these great sages differ in the relative emphasis given to the different aspects of that personality—physical, mental, emotional, moral and spiritual—and the means they advocate to reach their goal, but they are at one in emphasising that education must draw out and develop a child not only to the utmost of his intellectual capacity, but to the utmost of his physical, emotional, and, above all, moral and spiritual capacity. To our way of thinking also the supreme challenge of the educational administrator and of the teacher of today is enshrined in the dictum of the ancient Latin poet “*Nihil humanum a me alienum puto*”—every thing human, sublime and earthly, spiritual and mundane is their primary concern. Hence they should not only aim to educate, or better still co-educate what the Americans refer to as the 4 H’s—the Head, Heart, Hand and Health (physical and mental),—striving always to preserve a sense of balance and harmony and to promote a healthy integration between these four key elements of the human personality, they should also remember that this *summum bonum* will only be achieved if they never lose sight of the fifth and most important H—Holiness—which connotes for the author a synthesis the Greek conception of the full and rounded development of the *homme moyen sensuel* with the fundamentally religious conception of man’s ultimate dependence on God. “Glory to man in the highest for man is the measure of things” is the paean of self-praise of modern secularists and scientific humanists, the establishment of an earthly paradise through modern science and technology their goal; they only too often forget that “peace on earth to men of good-will” was only promised to those who are ready to give “Glory to God in the highest”, and that the pursuit of the brotherhood of man and the ideal of service before self is likely to prove a mirage unless men learn to believe, and to act upon the belief, in the Fatherhood of God.

This is the theme of this book, the link that unites the apparently disconnected chapters. The ideal of education



is to produce "full men", well-developed and many-sided personalities, men of character, honesty, truth and integrity—curricula, methods, discipline, audio-visual aids, co-curricular activities, work experience, social service, citizenship training, moral instructions and religious education are but means to this end. And such "full men" must be inspired to use their talents, abilities, knowledge and skills, not to treat the world as their oyster and feather their own nests, but to give back to their fellow men and to the world in full measure all that is best in them, and to make that unique contribution to the world which only they can make. Moreover it should never be forgotten that "No man is an island", hence "full men" can only be shaped by the society in which they live and move and have their being and by its social and community institutions—the home, the school, the local community, the State and, last but not least, the Church, Mosque or Temple. From each of these the growing child and youth will receive much, to each he will give much, and in the creative give-and-take between the individual and the various social groups with which he will come into contact the child will grow into healthy youth and manhood.

All these means and agencies help the child to grow into a man, but as education is essentially the influence of persons on persons, two groups of persons will inevitably exert the greatest and most enduring influence on the education of the child—his parents and his teachers. Good parents and good teachers are born as well as made; unless they themselves are the right type of human beings, no amount of child psychology and pedagogy will help them very much to exert the right influence on the growing child. Here also the human factor is all important—what we need is the right sort of human beings, the right sort of parents and teachers will follow. And to be the right sort of human beings, they need to have not merely the Know-How and the Know-What, but the Know-Why, in short a worthwhile and satisfying philosophy of life to be a beacon, rudder and motive force in their difficult exacting but supremely worthwhile task of helping the children and youth of today to grow into the men and women of to-morrow.

The author hopes that this book will assist parents, teachers,

educational administrators and the educated laymen to comprehend, in all its fullness and potential glory, the true nature and scope of education and the staggering complexity of the task of the educator, be he parent or teacher, teacher educator or educational administrator. He would like to stress that the views expressed are entirely his own personal views; they are the fruit of over twenty years practical experience as a teacher and Inspector, of his first-hand study of educational theory and practice in several countries besides India, of his reading, reflection and discussions with heads, teachers and educational administrators in India and abroad.

Some of the chapters in this book have appeared in article form in various educational journals and magazines; the author is grateful to the Editors of these journals for permission to reproduce in this book these articles, suitably edited and in some cases substantially altered. His thanks are due particularly to the Editors of "Teaching", "Indian Education", "The Education Quarterly", "Secondary Education", "The Rajasthan Journal of Education" and "The Orissa Educational Journal". The author is grateful to the Education Department, West Bengal, for permission to publish this book. With these acknowledgements, the author speeds this book on its way, hoping it will be of some help especially to fellow teachers and administrators, and to those preparing to enter what has been aptly described as "the worst paid, the least advertised, and the most richly rewarding profession in the world".

A. A. D'SOUZA





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## THE HUMAN FACTOR IN EDUCATION

STRIPPED of the many accretions that have gathered round it through the centuries, education is fundamentally the influence for weal or for woe which the teacher, a more mature and experienced personality, exerts on his students, the immature and growing personalities, entrusted to his care. "Education", says Sir John Wolfenden, "is essentially the influence of one person on another. Always the influence is that of one mind, one personality, one character on another. That at any rate is how it all begins." In these days of increasing State and institutional regimentation of education, bigger and better school buildings, elaborate equipment, like Electronic Computers and Teaching Machines, scientific methods and new media, impressive curricula, neatly labelled and docketed into subjects and syllabuses, it is becoming increasingly necessary to re-emphasize this fact.

Educational salvation lies not in a streamlined system of educational organisation, tricked out with all the modern paraphernalia of learning, but in the personal, human factor which underlies a modern educational system and makes it tick. It is mainly because this human factor in education is apt to be either forgotten, neglected, or taken too much for granted, that the rapid increase in the number of schools and the noticeable improvement in buildings, equipment and curricula and text-books have not been accompanied by a commensurate improvement in the quality of the education imparted to them. Education has been extended, it has not been individualised, enriched and humanised; this lopsided progress is due in large measure to the increasing mechanization of education, and the relative disregard of the vitalising human factor which alone can quicken it into life and clothe the skeleton of the educational system in our own or any other country with flesh and blood and vitality.

"The first and most important task of education", according to Professor Ralph Borsodi, "is to humanise humanity to



educate the population everywhere as nearly as possible into normal human beings. This fact must dominate all considerations of the content and organisation of education." Underlying the complicated and elaborate administrative and organisational structure erected by progressive countries all over the world to provide equal educational facilities for all their citizens from the cradle to the grave, is a complex of human interpersonal and group relationships—relationships between the legislators who legislate for education and those who execute their orders; between administrators and heads, heads and teachers, teachers and children, and the governmental school authorities and the community at large. It is upon the scope, nature and quality of these relationships, and the degree of success with which the various parties mutually co-operate, resolve their differences, and learn to pull together that the success or failure of any system of education, however perfect on paper, will ultimately depend.

A recent research conducted in America by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teachers, which was confirmed by a subsequent follow-up research by the Carnegie Institute of Technology, established beyond doubt, that skill in human relationships was the most fundamental factor for success in any profession, even those like engineering where it was thought, till recently, that technical expertise alone was necessary; it seems superfluous to add that such skill is doubly important in the highly personal and essentially human field of education. Unless the people who are responsible for the working of the educational system have, in addition to the necessary expertise, the capacity to understand, sympathize, inspire, and where necessary to lead, as gently and unobtrusively as possible, their colleagues and subordinates, the children committed to their care and the public at large, even the most perfect system of education will inevitably fail to a greater or less degree, to deliver the goods.

Legislators whose privilege and duty it is to legislate basic educational measures, without which educational progress would be difficult if not impossible, should therefore keep their finger continuously on the pulse of the public, and maintain especially close contact with Heads, teachers, parents and all others immediately interested in education. The lack of

interest and the relative ignorance which the vast majority of legislators betray when important educational bills are being discussed in most countries is lamentable; few members take the trouble to study the issues at stake carefully, and many seem to think that, having been through school themselves, they know all there is to know about education! The increasing tendency to legislate in educational matters with political considerations pre-eminently in view is also to be seriously deplored; recent history in the totalitarian countries, and alas in our own, shows that it will be an ill day for education when out-and-out politicians begin calling the tune to which teachers, parents and children have to dance!

Educational matters should be decided primarily on educational principles. Education is today a highly developed science and an art, and it is the business of all law-makers to acquaint themselves with its latest principles and practices, either at first hand or by consulting expert bodies of non-officials such as Heads and Teachers' Associations or Parent-Teacher bodies. An excellent device to make this possible is for every country or State to have an Advisory Board of Education on the pattern of the Central Advisory Board of Education in India and the Advisory Council of Education in the U.K., but more broad-based, which should lay down the guidelines for the Government's education policy. It is only by some such methods of liaison between the Government, professional educationists and the public at large that 'public education' will really be 'public' in that it will reflect the wishes of the community as a whole, and not any one section of it or of the Powers-that-Be.

Educational administrators have to shoulder the difficult task of executing the policies of the legislators. They form the direct link between the Government and the schools and have the primary responsibility to give the legislation enacted by the former, enlightened or otherwise, a local habitation and a name. The need for the human element in educational administration is most urgent, as it is here that it is most often lost sight of. Educational administrators, be they Directors of Education or Inspectors of Schools, who act like bureaucrats, sitting in their offices, surrounded by files and red tape, magisterially issuing 'fiats' to the Heads and teachers

in the schools are almost certain to be opposed and baulked at every turn and twist and to see their best planned schemes come to nought, for when it comes to a conflict between administrators and school authorities, the administrators may compel obedience to the letter of the law, but its spirit will have fled if school authorities are hostile or apathetic to what they regard as unwarranted external pressure and interference. Not hostility or indifference, but understanding, mutual regard, trust, consultation and cooperation should be the distinguishing feature of the relationship between administrators and Heads of schools and their staff.

This can only be established through regular, carefully planned and fruitful personal contacts. Administrators must leave their air-conditioned offices and their files from time to time and go into the schools to make first-hand contacts with the teachers and Heads, to consult them, to learn from them to help, encourage and guide them, and to endeavour to find out at first hand what their real difficulties are and what solutions they have to put forward to solve them. They must not be 'Big Bosses' ordering school authorities, teachers and Heads around but guides, friends and philosophers to them. Only thus will they give Heads and teachers that deep sense of satisfaction and security that springs from shared work and responsibility, which will, in turn, soon communicate itself to the children under their charge.

The personal relationship between a Head and his staff is, perhaps, the greatest single factor in determining the character and quality of the education given at a school. Only too often this relationship leaves much to be desired, the Head pulling one way, and the teachers another. The fault is generally on both sides. The Head thinks he has a monopoly of wisdom, experience and knowledge, and the staff unduly resents any attempt on his part to patronise help, advise or criticize them. It is time the "Arnold Myth", of the all-wise, all-seeing, all-knowing Head, who rules his school like a benevolent despot and puts his impression on every feature of its life and working, was pricked! Dr. Arnold in any case worked through his 6th Form, a modern Head must not only work on and through but with his staff. He must not be a despot, however benovolent, but "*primus inter pares*"



the captain of a team, each member of which has a specific and unique part to play in the successful management of the school, for without team work and the team spirit, no school can really be run successfully. The machinery of school life may function smoothly but its inner health, vitality, spirit and ethos, which are so vital to its success, will be missing.

The ultimate responsibility for the life and work of the school must, of course, be vested in the Head, but he should make it a practice to consult and be guided by his staff on vital matters, and, with their active co-operation, to evolve a common and agreed policy for the school. In these days especially when the administrative work of the Head is steadily on the increase, which confines him for the major part of his day to his office desk, it would be a sound policy for Heads to devolve some of their responsibility on to the shoulders of the senior members of their staff. Above all, they must show by word, deed and example that they have full confidence and trust in, and a high regard for, every member of their staff, for, without this essential human basis, the school will be a soulless machine devoid of life and spirit.

In the school itself, the teacher-pupil relationship provides the key to the success or failure of the education imparted in the classroom or the playground. The personality of the teacher is all-important; what a teacher is, is much more important than what he teaches. Trust, confidence, a respect for the child, sympathy, understanding, freedom within limits, and affection should be the keynotes of the teacher's approach to the child; the children, on their part, should be encouraged to develop their many-sided personalities in an atmosphere of ordered freedom and fruitful learning and activity, with a sense of responsibility, self-discipline and respect for authority. It is not easy to strike a balance between teaching and learning, formal and informal education, freedom and discipline, liberty and authority, book-learning and activity learning, yet this balance must be striven after by teacher and pupil together. No hard and fast rules can be laid down to achieve it, as circumstances differ from class to class and school to school, but if the human approach is ever kept in the forefront by the teacher, he will be well on the way to the achievement of the ideal.

Teachers and parents are natural partners in the education of the child. In the early formative years of a child's life the influence of the parents predominates, but in later years, and especially in residential schools, the teacher is often literally as well as metaphorically in *loco parentis*. No true education of the child is possible unless teachers and parents know and understand and appreciate each other's point of view, even where they agree to differ, and unless there is unity of purpose and of endeavour between them in their common task of helping the child to grow to full maturity, physically, mentally and spiritually. Such a relationship of mutual understanding, trust and co-operation between home and school is not merely desirable in itself, it is essential for the full balanced and many-sided development of the child.

Finally, there is relationship between the school and the community outside its walls. In the past, schools were 'community schools,' the focal centre of the community. Nowadays, they tend to be increasingly isolated from the community, and to raise visible and invisible barriers between themselves and parents and guardians and the world outside their walls. Considering that children are being prepared for family life and for life in the wider society outside the school's walls, such isolation is extremely dangerous. There is, as we shall stress in our chapter on "School and Society", an urgent need for the schools to establish as many and as fruitful contacts as possible with the outside world, and for the existing gap between schools and the community to be bridged so that the education given at the former will be a truly effective "education for life". It is only by making the school once more a Community Centre that children will be able to be educated in by and for the community, in living and dynamic contact with the adult world of today and tomorrow.

The human factor is thus of cardinal importance at every point in the educational system. It is indeed the growing point in education, the lubrication which makes the educational machine work smoothly and efficiently, the life's blood that endows it with perennial health, vigour and vitality. Education is an essentially human affair; if this is forgotten all true education will cease, however impressive the external trappings may be.

## II

### SOME HERESIES IN MODERN EDUCATION

THE late G. K. Chesterton defined a heresy, not as a falsehood, but an aspect of the truth that was so magnified that it lost all sense of proportion and obscured the whole truth. If one surveys, objectively and dispassionately, the field of educational theory and practice in India to-day, one finds that many heresies in G.K.C.'s interpretation of the term have, consciously or unconsciously, cropped up, heresies which because they embody partial truths, are more dangerous than obvious falsehoods. In this chapter the author will endeavour to spotlight a few of the more popular and dangerous educational heresies which are acquiring a disturbing currency in the field of Indian education to-day, and threatening to dehumanise the essentially human process of education.

A short while ago a national humorous magazine published a very pertinent cartoon. It showed a magnificent, newly-built Multipurpose School building, with a signboard outside advertising for trained teachers possessing 1st class M.A. or M.Sc. degrees, preferably Ph.D's, on salaries of Rs. 75-3-90. Two M.L.A's are gloating over the building, and one remarks to the other "If we do not get any teachers, we can always turn it into a Hotel!" This provocative cartoon spotlights one of the most widespread educational heresies of to-day, the heresy of brick and mortar. This heresy takes the form of the conscious or sub-conscious belief that brick and mortar are more necessary in the sphere of education than flesh and blood, mind and spirit; that school buildings are more important than the men and women who are to teach in them; that while no expense should be spared on lavish school plant, the utmost economy should be observed in fixing teachers' salaries; and, that, if a modern, well-equipped and furnished school building is provided, modern, progressive teaching will inevitably follow, even if those utilising the building are underpaid, under-qualified, ineffective, frustrated men and women teachers.

This heresy of brick and mortar, and, since these cost money,



of misspent money, is fairly universal, and takes many forms. At the topmost level the major share of the money set aside in the various Development Plans in the field of education is being spent on new buildings, and on equipping them, leaving little over to enable Central State Governments to help school authorities to improve salary scales sufficiently to attract the right type of teachers who will be able to utilise the buildings to the fullest advantage.

It is true that school buildings and surroundings play an important part in the education of a child, hence administrators can feel a sense of justifiable pride if they have been able to provide more and better buildings and more furniture and equipment for more children. But they should not make the common mistake of confusing quantitative expansion or better school plant with qualitative improvement, or, what is worse, equating it with educational progress. The President of the WCTS, Sir Ronald Gould, in a recent address on "Conditions of Work for Quality Teaching" drew pointed attention to this danger.

"The quality of education cannot be measured by counting heads, certificates, buildings, pounds, dollars. Physical, intellectual and spiritual excellence are realities of a different order. We in education want to be right, and so prefer the measurable, and avoid, if we can, the uncertain moral, intellectual and spiritual standards resulting in different answers, provoking argument and conflict. To say that more schools have been built is indisputable, to say that the quality of education is improving is open to argument."

Sri J. P. Naik, member-Secretary of the National Education Commission in a recent book on "Educational Planning in India" has highlighted the fact that educational planning in India since independence has been guilty of overemphasising physical and financial factors in Developmental Schemes, and of neglecting the more important human factors. "Better education", he states, "does need more investment, and physical resources no doubt. But it needs human efforts still more, the combined effort of officers of the Education Department, the teachers, the students, and the parents. There is a tendency for these human agencies to work less and less, both in quantity and quality, and to demand more financial investment and physical facilities on the ground that they are

inescapable for better education. There is also a strong tendency to emphasise schemes that involve expenditure rather than thought because it is easier to spend money than thought, especially when it is someone else's money. The fallacy of this trend is obvious, and an attempt must be made in the future to organise a nation-wide programme of educational improvement at all stages—from the elementary to the university by trying to motivate the human agencies concerned to a more intensive and better planned endeavour."

At the level of the individual school or institution, one observes School Managements dreaming, planning and saving for the construction of new building extensions or acquiring new furniture and equipment, instead of devoting this time, energy and money to improve the service conditions and the salary scales of their teachers, or to make the education given in their schools effective for *all* children, and not 60,70 or even 90%! It is time the hollowness of this heresy of brick and mortar was exposed, and that Heads and Managing Committees ceased to measure educational progress in terms of the number of new buildings constructed and the money spent on them. Good buildings, adequate furniture and equipment are important, the men and women who teach in them are very much more important. A capable teacher can work miracles in a one-room School-House or under a banian tree, an incompetent teacher will accomplish little in a school palace, equipped with the newest of New Media for teaching. And, from the child's point of view, what goes on in a school, the type of education he receives, and the extent to which it meets his needs and aspirations is much more important than the size, impressiveness and cost of the school buildings and furniture and equipment. In this connection the following incident quoted in a report of the Central Advisory Board of Education in the U.K. is worth quoting and recommending: "A boy who had just left school was asked by his former headmaster what he thought of the new buildings. 'It could all be marble,' sir, he replied, 'but it would still be a bloody school!'"

A second fairly common heresy, closely allied to the first, is the heresy of numbers. The Headmaster of a school some time ago boasted to the author that in the three years of his steward-

ship he had trebled the numbers on the school roll, and consequently the school income. Having observed the tragic educational effects of endeavouring to fit 900 boys in a school built for 300, and heard the teachers' complaints at being compelled to teach 45-50 children in a class, the author quietly posed the question "And do you consider Mr..... that your school is three times as good as it was before you took over, because you now have thrice the number of pupils, and thrice as much money to spend on new buildings, so that you can quadruple your roll strength". The Headmaster, in question, at first thought the author was joking, later realising he was in deadly earnest. He was at first nonplussed, and later a little shamefaced when it was pointed out to him that his school was qualitatively probably 66% worse than it was when he took charge.

An increasing number of Managements and Heads all over India are guilty of the heresy of numbers, and are suffering from an exaggerated sense of self-importance because their institutions are crowded and they have long Waiting Lists. Schools are mushrooming in size with alarming rapidity, and the ambition of the majority of Heads and Managing Committees appears to be to capitalise on the current boom in education and to admit as many children into their schools as they can, without due consideration as to whether they are in the process doing educational justice either to the children, who can learn very little in overcrowded classes where they can get no real individual attention from the teacher; to the teacher, who cannot possibly cope with the numbers he is expected to teach; or to the parents who are not getting their money's worth.

It is high time that Managing Committees and Heads realised that because one school is larger, more popular and more crowded than another, it is not necessarily a better school; that the law of diminishing returns operates in the field of education as well as in the field of economics, and that the larger a school becomes, the less it resembles a good school and the more it becomes a teaching factory, with formal discipline, assembly line techniques, and mass production replacing that living human, individual contact between masters and pupils which is the soul of good education.



The author fully realises that in a period of unprecedented educational expansion in India, such as that in which we have been caught up during the past 15 years, quality is bound to suffer to some extent as a result of too rapid quantitative expansion. But still he considers that before we go much further, we ought to realise clearly the peculiar relationship that exists between quality and quantity in education. Too rapid educational expansion such as has taken place during the past decade and a half in all schools in India inevitably leads to a dilution, in quality; this in turn creates conditions favourable to still further expansion so that quality is diluted still further. A vicious circle is thus established such as we see in our midst to-day.

On the other hand, efforts to improve the quality of education act as a natural corrective to haphazard and reckless expansion, a strict curb on expansion in its turn creates conditions to still further improvement in quality.

The author is of the considered opinion that future expansion should be carefully planned to prevent further dilution, and that at the same time, in order to start a cycle of continuous improvement in quality we should make carefully planned and intensive efforts to improve over-all standards in our schools, and, what is of considerably greater importance, to reduce the considerable wastage that is taking place in all Indian schools. In a rough and ready survey of the extent of such 'wastage' in Anglo-Indian schools in West Bengal it was found that only 40% of all children who joined these schools in Class III in 1952 were left in Class XI in 1960 which means that 60% dropped out before sitting for the Indian Schools Certificate Examination. The corresponding national figures for non-Anglo-Indian schools are that of every 100 boys who join in Class I approximately 10 are left in Class X. These are very disturbing figures, hence the author is convinced that we ought to concentrate during the next decade on trying to reduce this wastage as far as lies in our power.

This can best be achieved by a double pronged attack. The first line of attack will be to take immediate steps to improve the quality of Primary education by planning carefully the opening of new schools, and tightening up conditions for recognition; by cutting down the size of over-

large schools and over-large classes in existing schools; by starting tutorial and remedial classes for backward retarded and maladjusted children; and by establishing in every school some kind of School Guidance Service headed by a trained part-time Teacher Counsellor who will diagnose and prescribe appropriate remedial treatment for educational and psychological deficiencies before they develop to a point where the child leaves school or is sent away.

The second line of attack will be to diversify our system of Secondary education by providing a large variety of Trade schools, and Junior Technical, Agricultural and Commercial schools to which children who have a practical rather than a verbal intelligence can be diverted after Class VIII.

This double pronged attack will help considerably to reduce the considerable present wastage to manageable proportions. The author is of the considered opinion that educational administrators, Heads and teachers will be increasingly judged by the vision, the sincerity and relative success with which they mitigate, if they cannot completely solve, this shattering problem of wastage in our schools. The report of the Central Advisory Board of Education in England, popularly called the Newsom Report, to which a brief reference was made earlier which deals with a similar problem in England is graphically called "Half Our Future". Explaining this title, the report quotes Disraeli's axiom "Upon the Education of this country, the future of this country depends" and adds that since children with whom the report was concerned represent 50% of the population, half the future of England depended on the education and training given to them in such schools. The present situation in India is such that more than half our future depends on the way in which we measure up to and endeavour to find a solution to this grave problem of the actual and potential drop-outs from Primary and Secondary schools all over the country. Of such children it can be stated in the words of the Newsom Report "Their potentialities are no less real, and of no less importance because they do not readily lend themselves to measurement by conventional criteria of academic achievement. The essential point is that all children should have an equal

opportunity of acquiring intelligence and of developing their talents and abilities to the full."

The heresy of numbers is closely linked to, and, in a sense, an outgrowth of a much more widespread and deep-seated heresy in the field of the Social Sciences, especially those of education and psychology. This heresy, which it is difficult to label precisely, springs from the modern attempt to treat the social sciences as we treat the natural sciences, and to transfer the laboratory methods and techniques, the formulae and statistical approaches of the latter to the former in an attempt to solve their many untractable human problems.

There is much virtue in this approach, and it has accomplished much in rescuing education and psychology from the arid realm of armchair theorising and bringing it into the fruitful realm of practical observation and experiment. But, precisely because of its aura of scientific exactitude, its mathematical approach and statistical presentation of results, this heresy is all the more dangerous, not because its findings are not, as far as they go, reliable, but precisely because these findings do not go far enough, and the partial truth represented by them tends to hide the whole truth of the matter in question.

This quasi-scientific heresy is particularly dangerous in the essentially human field of education and child psychology. Each child is a living, breathing, many-sided personality who must be approached as an individual if he is to be truly educated in the fullest sense of the word, in accordance with his age, abilities and aptitudes. There is a growing tendency, however, to think of schools as institutions rather than as communities of teacher and children, to think of pupils in the mass or as groups rather than individuals. Thus one hears Heads increasingly talking in terms of staff-student ratios, percentages of examination successes and failures, rating scales and statistical averages. These attempts to make education more scientific are praiseworthy, and have their use. Unfortunately, only too often, they tend to dehumanise the essentially human process of education, to lose sight of the individual child in a mass of statistical norms, percentiles, averages and ratios, to focus attention on and to overemphasise a part of the child's psychological make-up

at the expense of his total personality, to miss the wood for the trees.

Many examples of the operation of this quasi-scientific heresy, and of its dangerous consequences, can be given. Only one or two will be singled out here.

Intelligence testing is a new and growingly popular feature of education in India, Heads, teachers and even the man in the street talk glibly of the I.Q. of a child. The concept of I.Q. is a valuable one for determining whether the child who has been tested is average, below average, or above average in relationship with other children of his age group; it should not be regarded, as it is unfortunately in many quarters, as a sort of hallmark which can, *per se*, exalt or down a child in the eyes of others. Moreover, while intelligence is an important character trait, and is likely to play a considerable part in determining the future career of the child, at school and after, it is only one of many character traits possessed by the child which will determine his success at school and in after life. Hence school authorities should never, as they are frequently apt to do, estimate the value and intrinsic worth of the children under their charge solely on the basis of their intelligence. If this fact is accepted, one wonders whether, apart from administrative convenience, there is any real educational and psychological justification for holding Selection tests to admit children into school, if such tests aim at selecting only the most intelligent children for admission, and rejecting the great majority of lesser intelligence who might, from all other points of view, be much more worthy of admission. The Chestertonian heresy underlying such a method of selection would appear to be that schools exist primarily for clever children, and that average and below average children should be left to shift for themselves as best they can!

The same heresy appears to underlie the increasing practice of asking boys and girls who cannot measure up to the standards set by the school to leave school, occasionally even in the primary classes, and, increasingly, as they move into the middle and senior school. Instead of the school fitting itself to the varying abilities and aptitudes of its children, a Procrustean effort is made to fit the child to the school, an effort



that in the case of many, too many, children lead inevitably to the type of slow death which takes the form of the issue of a Transfer Certificate and requesting the parent to withdraw the child from the school. Would perhaps it not in such cases be more pertinent to regard such early leavers not as bad boys and girls being asked to leave a good school but as essential good boys and girls being asked to leave a bad school, bad in the sense that it made no real effort to devise for such children a type of education suited to their individual abilities, aptitudes and talents.

Again School authorities often claim that they usually secure 90% or even cent per cent success in Public examinations. The percentage of successes in such cases appears to be very creditable, but what about the failures? Why have they failed, and whose responsibility is it? How many children are actually involved—is it 100% out of 10 candidates, or out of 100? It surely makes a difference.

Again how genuine are the so-called cent per cent results? How accurate an estimate are they of the worth of the school? How many children did the class have when it started out in Class I or Class VI. How many were unable to keep the pace set by the brighter pupils and the teachers and have dropped by the wayside? How many were held back after the dreaded Selection Test, in sight of the ultimate goal? How many, in short, survived the ruthless process of selection which took no chances and made certain that only those who were absolutely certain to pass reached the final class and were actually presented for the Public Examination. All the "drop outs" must be totalled up and balanced against the final list of successful candidates before the so-called cent per cent results can be seen in true perspective.

The author fully realises that schools are judged by parents and by the public at large by its Public examination results. But educators ought to be quite clear in their minds that good examination results are by themselves not enough to qualify a school to be regarded as a good school, and that they can pay too high a price in human and psychological terms for good examination results. Examinations are a necessary part of good education, they should not be exalted to be the be-all and end-all of education, or educators will lose sight of their

ultimate goal which is to produce well-educated and well-rounded personalities capable of holding their own in the much more exacting examination of life.

It is often said that ours is the Century of the Child, and child-centred education is the slogan of the day. The child-centred movement in education is on the whole, healthy but there has been a tendency to overemphasise the importance of the child at the expense of the teacher. There is no doubt that, from the point of view of the teacher, the education imparted should be child-centred, but from the point of view of the administration, it would perhaps be more appropriate, and of greater educational value, to think and plan in terms of teacher-centred rather than child-centred schools; indeed it is only if the administration is teacher-centred that child-centred education of the pupils is likely to follow. Yet it appears that Heads plan for everything except for good teachers. Many fondly hope that these will be forthcoming by the normal market law of demand and supply. A moment's reflection will make us realise, however, that while the demand for teachers is increasing astronomically due to expansion of existing schools and the starting of new schools, the actual supply is quite inadequate and the gap between demand and supply grows greater annually. Unless Legislators, Administrators, Heads and teachers are seized with the magnitude and life and death nature of the teacher-problem immediately, and draw up and implement a crash and long term programme designed to attract and retain good teachers in the nation's schools at all levels the teachers' situation will be impossible in the years ahead.

Education, as Dr. Kothari, Chairman of the U.G.C. and of the National Education Commission pointed out, "provides a good illustration of the 'feed-back process'. If effective short-term and long-term plans are drawn up and implemented to ensure that an appreciable number of suitable boys and girls annually join the teaching profession, we shall not only prevent any further fall in standards in our schools but we will have continuously escalating improvement in education. On the contrary, if we plough back in our schools young men and women of less than average ability, and if the supply of even such sub-standard candi-

dates is inadequate, standards must inevitably and rapidly go down further as years go by. The key to a continuous improvement of standards in our schools is, therefore, to feed back into the teaching profession every year a reasonable proportion of the best young men and women turned out by our schools."

Attracting good teachers to the Training College, and from there to the schools, is the first step. Retaining them in service is the next. This means not only paying them as attractively as possible, but providing other essential fringe benefits such as free accommodation, free schooling for their children, and some form of Pension or Insurance in addition to Provident Fund.

Linked with the problem of attracting and retaining good teachers in our schools, and partly responsible for it, is another heresy which is summed up in the frequently quoted axiom that "The Headmaster is the school." It is time that this heresy, which dates back to the famous Dr. Arnold, was realised for what it is, a dangerous half-truth. It is true that upon the Head rests the chief responsibility of organising and administering the school, and that the tone and efficiency of a school depends largely on the personality and competence of the Head. But, living as we do in a radically democratic climate of opinion, it is important, for Heads to realise clearly, and to act upon the realisation, that they are Head-teachers, *primus inter pares*, that many of their teachers are as well-qualified, as experienced and as capable as they are, and hence that they must give their staff members a more positive say in matters of school policy. Frequent staff meetings at which there is a two-way traffic of views on all matters pertaining to the welfare of the school, and at which Head and teachers can educate each other about the latest developments in educational theory and practice, are an essential means of promoting healthy and creative Head-staff relationships, and welding the staff together as a real team under the leadership of the Head. There still tends to be far too much paternalism and maternalism in Head-staff relationships in perhaps the majority of schools, in India, the administration is still very much a One-Man (or One-Woman) show in which all major, and sometimes even minor decisions, are

made without staff consultation, unilaterally by the Head and handed down to the staff. Theirs not to reason why, theirs but to carry out orders! Many good teachers suffer from frustration on this account and hence do not give of their best. In this connection, administrators and heads would do well to ponder on the advice given by Sir Ronald Gould, President of the W.C.T.O.P., who perhaps knows more about ways of attracting and retaining good teachers than most. In a recent address to the W. C. T. O. P., Sir Ronald set down Five Commandments to be observed by Heads and administrators, if they wished to secure and keep good teachers. "Thou shalt educate the teacher's will"; "Thou shalt pay the teachers a reasonable rate"; "Thou shalt encourage thy teachers to teach"; "Thou shalt trust thy teachers." These are the first four commandments.

The fifth is "Thou shalt treat thy teachers, not as bondsmen but as partners". Elaborating on this commandment, Sir Ronald states categorically "No quality education is possible without good personal relationships. When teachers are treated as allies and colleagues, are consulted and given responsibility, they respond with better teaching results. If, on the other hand, teachers are given no effective power, then the truth of Adlai Stevenson's words becomes apparent 'Power corrupts, but lack of power corrupts absolutely.' The teachers become resentful and irresponsible, and the children suffer".

Finally, there is the dangerous heresy of seeking for educational panaceas which will, once and for all, solve all our educational problems and of crystallising them in popular slogans which prevent effective thinking and action about them. Thus we were told that Basic Education would solve most, if not all, the problems in the field of elementary education, and diversified Multipurpose education would play a similar cleansing role in the complex field of secondary education. What precisely is meant by Basic Education or the Multipurpose school has neither been clearly and comprehensively defined in theory nor exemplified in practice; yet the objective was that all primary schools in India should be converted into the "basic pattern" and all secondary schools dreamt of being Multipurpose schools in the near future. That there is very much of real and enduring edu-



cational worth in both these modern developments should not, however, blind us to the fact that Basic education and Multi-purpose schools are still in the experimental stage, and that the gap between the educational principles underlying them, however sound, and the accomplished educational fact looms as large as ever, even after several years of trial and error. Hence we should not be in too great a hurry to discard what we have, on the "Off-with-the-Old, On-with-the-New" idea that seems to be fashionable in the educational world today in India. While the traditional system of education has in it much dead wood that needs to be ruthlessly pruned, it also has much of value and proved worth that should be retained. To think and act otherwise may mean throwing out the baby with the bath water. And the last state of education in our country as a result may well be worse than the first.

### III

## EDUCATION AND THE INDIVIDUAL

WILLIAM TEMPLE, a famous Headmaster and Archbishop of Canterbury once wrote—"The aim of education may be summed up by saying that it is the development of everything about a man that distinguishes him from an animal or a machine—the discipline of the intelligence, the quickening of the imagination, the widening of the sympathies". This description of the function of education would be accepted by most educationists, for it is universally acknowledged today, in theory if not in practice, that the ultimate aim of education is not merely to impart knowledge or train the mind, but to help the individual child to develop his or her manysided abilities and aptitudes and to grow to full maturity of body, mind and spirit.

This ideal was given eloquent expression by the late Sir Percy Nunn in his classic treatise "Education: Its Data and First Principles!" Nunn asserted the claim of individuality to be the supreme educational ideal, summing up his views in his dictum "Individuality is the ideal of life and of education". Nunn was aware of the vitally important part played by society in the education of the growing child and the obligations of the educated man to the society in which he lives, but, unfortunately, he did not develop this aspect of education adequately. A natural reaction set in with Dewey and Kilpatrick in America and Karl Mannheim and Sir Fred Clarke in England, and ever since the first World War, which was in many ways the logical outcome of an over-emphasis on "rugged individuality" and the apotheosis of the individual as a law unto himself, the social and sociological aspects of education have been brought more and more to the fore.

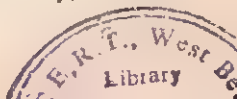
It is primarily on the sociological objectives of education and its planned use as an instrument to achieve a socialistic pattern of the society and a Welfare State which is the goal of Free India, that the Report of the National Education Commission focuses the Nation's attention. The members

of this learned Commission were, it is true, well aware of the danger inherent in such a policy, that the individual may be treated as a means to an end. "This emphasis on the social purpose of education, on the need to use it as a tool for the realisation of national aspirations", the Commission is quick to point out, "does not imply any underestimation of values for the individual. In a democracy the individual is an end in himself, and the primary purpose of education is to furnish him with the widest opportunities to develop his potentialities to the full". Having said this, however, the Commission reverts to its main theme. "But the path to the goal lies through social reorganisation and emphasis on social perspectives. In fact, one of the most important principles to be emphasised in the socialistic pattern of the society which the nation desires to achieve is that individual fulfilment will come, not through selfish and narrow loyalties to personal or group interests, but through dedication in the wider loyalties of national development in all the parameters."

There is, as the approach of the Kothari Commission underlines, little danger that our own generation will ignore the sociological and economic implications and compulsions of education. We realise quite clearly today that the pupil is not an isolated, atomic individual but an individual-in-society, and that we must educate him both for life adjustment and so that he may make a living contribution to his socio-economic and cultural milieu. The contemporary danger is that we may push this idea to extremes and overemphasise the social, and sociological aspects of education at the expense of its individual and personal aspect. The totalitarian objective in education is to pattern and condition individuals into the types of workers the State needs, to produce, not what Miss Parkhurst of Dalton Plan fame, called "fearless individuals", but the "Mass man" who will prove an efficient and willing cog in the omniscient State machine. Hence all education in such countries is under rigid state control, and the Schools, Colleges, Clubs, Homes, Newspapers, Drama, Literature and every other educational influence that infringes however remotely on the life of the growing child are so planned as to produce, not the infinite variety of human beings to be found in a democracy, but a

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stereotyped pattern of men and women who have only so much individuality as the State decides is useful for the purposes for which it has decided to use them.

This totalitarian overemphasis on the collectivity rather than the individual, on admass rather than the individual personality, makes it essential for us in India, who have rejected the totalitarian form of Government in favour of the democratic ideal and way of life, to be on our guard against the infiltration of totalitarian ideals and practices into the sphere of education. If we want a democracy, we must educate for one; and in a democratic system of education, there must be as much, if not more emphasis on the individual as on society, for, in the final analysis, society exists for the individual rather than the individual for society. To quote a famous educationist, "The basic principle of education in a democracy should be reverence for the individuality of the child, the child who is to grow up to be a citizen, upon whose full development and intelligent and willing participation in making it a more just, and more and more morally perfect social organisation the very fate of the democracy depends. For democracy is nothing but the full discharge by every citizen of duties he is competent to perform, duties to himself and duties to society. This competence can only be the result of aptitudes discovered and developed to their fullest by education."

The essence of the democratic way of life is that every man, woman and child should have equal freedom and opportunity to develop himself or herself to the fullest possible extent, so that they may be able to make their maximum contribution to the society in which they live. A progressive and healthy democracy demands individuals who can resist mass pressure and collectivist propaganda, and who can think, decide and act for themselves; who are not puppets, dancing to the strings pulled by their leaders, or slaves to impulse and passion, but men and women who are responsible for their own thoughts, feelings and actions. A dynamic democracy further needs not only wise and experienced leaders, but intelligent and rational disciples who do not accept uncritically



everything they are told, but who think and reason out things for themselves. In short, a democracy must be peopled not by passive automatons, but by active and creative individuals if it is to endure and to flourish. The individual, the particular, is the end; society, the general, the means. The supreme aim of education in a democracy is the enrichment of the life of the individual and the social organisation is only a means to that end. "We must", states the Norwood Report, "stress individuality in education, individuality of the pupil, individuality of the teacher of the school for indeed it is the key position of all. If this principle is lost, all is lost". And Sir Ronald Gould, President of the W.C.T.O.P. in an address to the world meeting of teachers stressed the role the school must play in this vitally important matter, putting it in its proper perspective. "One of the purposes of the school", said Sir Ronald, "must be to strengthen the community spirit. This is an essential duty, but it should also be the business of the school to develop individuality. For whilst common characteristics make a community possible, the uncommon characteristics of insight, discrimination and judgement make for progress, initiative and leadership. We shall therefore encourage the uncommon as well as the common". As Sir Fred Clarke puts it in a nutshell: "We must educate to reproduce the type, but must go beyond the type".

Unfortunately, the system of education in India is for the most part, both quantitatively and qualitatively, incapable of either reproducing a type or of producing real individuals. For a start, millions of boys and girls are still denied even the elements of education, and in their ignorance provide potential raw material for a totalitarian state. The existing over-centralisation and regimentation in educational administration in India also militates against the freedom to experiment and to adopt a system to the needs of the individuals served by it. This centralisation tends to stifle initiative and the spirit of independence in individual schools and teachers; these, in turn, complete the vicious circle by stifling individuality, originality and initiative in the children they teach. It also provides a potential weapon for thought control and mass indoctrination in the hands of unscrupulous politicians. "Exclusive control by the State", warns the Radhakrishnan

University Education Commission, "has been an important factor in facilitating the maintenance of totalitarian tyrannies. In such States, institutions of learning, controlled and managed by Governmental agencies, act like mercenaries, promote the political purposes of the State, make them acceptable to an increasing number of the populations, and supply them with the weapons they need. We must resist in the interest of our own democracy the trend towards the Governmental domination of the educational process". The warning is both salutary and timely in the India of today, for State control over education is on the increase, rather than the decrease in most States in India, a tendency which the National Education Commission strongly encourages.

The schools themselves, as they are organised today in India also, due to the twin evil of overcrowding and a rigidly authoritarian set-up tend to suppress rather than encourage individuality. Though a lip-service is paid to them in theory, there is in the average school little or no real appreciation or encouragement of individual differences; every child has to fit himself willynilly to the Procrustean bed of a one-track pattern of education in which the curriculum is conceived as a patchwork of ill-assorted subjects. Formal methods that ignore the individuals lay stress on the stuffed mind rather than the enquiring mind, and the neglect of the aesthetic and practical aspects of education and of the formation of character complete a dismal picture. The net result is that the schools turn out students who are, for the most part, animated sponges in whom resourcefulness and the power of original and creative thinking has been largely killed; whose heads are overdeveloped, but whose hands and hearts and character development are sadly stunted. The India of the future needs self-reliant, courageous and adventurous men and women who can think and act for themselves, who are well-developed and well-rounded personalities, not the mass-produced matriculates and graduates in their thousands who leave schools and colleges every year with no higher ambition in life than to become lowly paid, frustrated, routine clerks!

How can our educational system be reformed to encourage individuality and develop adventurous and fearless individuals? The first step is obviously to remove those obstacles in the

existing system of education that hinder or prevent the realisation of this ideal. Excessive bureaucratic control and regimentation by the State Department of Education should give way to decentralisation, and a greater measure of freedom should be extended to Heads and teachers to adapt their curricula and methods to their pupils and to the community for which they are preparing them. Schools, in their turn, must be quite clear as to what is their primary objective—to develop the individual personality of every pupil committed to their care to the fullest possible extent. Hence there should be less insistence on the 3R's and more on the 3A's—age, abilities and aptitudes—and, besides the subjectives of the curriculum, a wide range of physical, social and recreative co-curricula activities and experiences should be provided which will give every child the opportunity to develop every side of his many-sided personality. The child needs both something he knows well as well as something he can do well—both are a vital necessity for his mental and psychological health and well-being.

And, finally, the school must respect the child's freedom and not impose its will on him, but provide an environment in which there is the necessary elasticity, variety and room for individual adaptation for the development of the unique individuality of each child. The individual child should be the focus of attention in the school, but not as an isolated entity, for his personality can only be fully developed in and through the school community, the home community, and the wider community outside their walls. The child has a right to an education that will develop him to the fullest extent physically, mentally and spiritually, but he has a corresponding duty to give of his best to society and he must be made conscious of this duty. The school, therefore, must not only instil in the child a growing self-awareness of the innate strength and weakness of his own personality, but the added consciousness that he can only develop his personality fully in cooperation with other personalities whose uniqueness and whose individual rights must be respected just as his are.

A well-balanced, well-rounded personality who is responsible for and in control of his own thoughts, feelings and

actions, an individual in the fullest sense of the word, must have a sound and stable system of values and beliefs which rule his life and actions, otherwise he will be the sport of his passions and be the shifting winds of public opinion; it should be one of the main functions of the school to help its pupils to develop such ideals and values as will provide a frame of reference to help them to judge between conflicting viewpoints and courses of action and guide them on their journey through life.

The future of our country depends upon a system of education which aims to develop at every age and stage of education all the talent of all our youth. We must ensure that the education we give them develops all that is best in every single boy and girl in India, and inspires them to place their fully developed talents and canalised energies at the service of their country. Only by educating them as individuals, rather than as types, in an atmosphere of creative freedom and of equality, of fullness and variety of opportunity will this be possible. For, to quote Prof. Castle, "Persons, individual human beings, are at the centre of education. It is with individuals that education begins".



## IV

### SOME DYNAMIC FORCES IN EDUCATING THE INDIVIDUAL

Few modern educationists would dispute the fact that the total development of the individual is the principal objective of education in a democracy. But "No man is an island sufficient into himself", and the full flowering of the individual can, and only does take place in and through the society in which he lives, and moves, and has his being, and, above all, through formal and informal contacts with other individuals whose path he crosses in his journey through life. Man is fundamentally a social animal, one who is influenced in varying degrees by other people with whom he comes into contact in life. This influence may be obvious and direct, as when we are influenced by the spoken or written word, to feel, think and act in certain ways; or it may be indirect and less obvious, as when we are influenced, not so much by what people say, as by what they feel or what they do. These latter influences are more subtle, pervasive and more compelling than the former, and their potentialities, for good and for evil, are much greater.

Most men and women, and even children and young people have a contrary streak in their make-up which makes them openly resistant, or at least allergic, to direct preaching of any kind; very few are able to resist influences that, as it were, creep upon them unawares, and take them captive before they are alive to their danger.

Modern psychologists have succeeded in isolating the chief "hidden persuaders" which impinge upon the individual in his every-day life, and which, individually and collectively, consciously or unconsciously, determine his feelings, thoughts and actions, temporarily or permanently. Prominent among them are a trinity of dynamic social forces—Sympathy, Suggestion, and Imitation—the individual and collective effect of which on adults, and more especially adolescents and children, is significant enough to merit special consideration.

Sympathy is defined by Chambers 20th Century Dictionary as "Community of feeling, and power of entering into others' feelings or minds; harmonious understanding; compassion; pity, affinity or correlation whereby one thing responds to the action of another, or action upon another". Psychologists describe sympathy as a powerful irrational force which enables a person to enter into the feelings of others, to share, to a greater or less extent, in these feelings and the thoughts they motivate, and to be influenced, consciously or unconsciously, by them. Among adults, sympathy operates most powerfully in crowds; a clever orator, as did Marc Anthony in the funeral orations over Julius Caesar's corpse, can play upon the heart strings of a mob as skilfully as a great violinist upon the strings of his violin, and, in a short time, make them run the entire gamut of the emotions from dislike and distrust to blind trust and confidence, and from pity to rage. But sympathy also operates powerfully in small groups, and more especially, between individuals.

The force of sympathy, used with insight and discrimination, can be a powerful ally of the teacher both inside and outside the class-room. The inspired teacher can grip his class and carry them with him on breath-taking voyages of intellectual and emotional discovery; even the most pedestrian pedagogue is dimly aware that, unless he can establish "Rapport" with his class, he will never enkindle in them the pure flame of real love for knowledge and wisdom. Great teachers establish and maintain such rapport almost instinctively; with the run-of-the mill teacher, it is established only fitfully. Under a system of Class Teaching, sympathy is more readily forthcoming than under a system of specialist teaching, for, being together more and getting to know and appreciate each other better, teacher and class develop a sense of togetherness and a community of feeling in which the invisible bonds of sympathy are more easily and enduringly forged.

Outside the class-room, sympathy can be used to develop a sense of *esprit de corps* in a school; on the playing fields, in the School Assembly, and in various co-curricular activities. The strong "school spirit" that characterises public and residential schools is due largely to the fact that the community life of such institutions, consciously or uncon-

sciously, nurtures strong ties of sympathy and fellow-feeling among their alumnae which in later life finds expression—in a not always praiseworthy way—in the “Old School Tie” outlook and spirit of camaraderie.

Sympathy, wisely used, can be a powerful force for good in a school, binding students and teachers into a real community dedicated to share the pursuit of truth, beauty and goodness. If, however, its potentialities are not clearly realised and it is unwisely used, it can also do a great deal of harm. Wise administrators and teachers would, therefore, do well to handle this double-edged weapon with due care and circumspection.

Suggestion is another dynamic social force which can be utilised for good or for evil in the education of the individual. Psychologists describe suggestion as the process by which we accept the ideas, opinions and beliefs of others, and, as often as not, act upon them, without adequate grounds for such acceptance. Suggestion is often based on sympathy—we are more likely to accept suggestions from people with whom—to use an Italian word for which no exact English equivalent exists, ‘sympatic’ than from those with whom we are not. But it can also work independently of it, as when we occasionally accept suggestions from people to whom we may be naturally allergic, or even hostile, because of certain other factors which counteract our distrust or hostility. Suggestion is usually conveyed from one person to others through the spoken or printed word; but actions speak louder than words, and it is the suggestive force of example which is, above all, most powerful and enduring. Suggestion, like sympathy, can and does operate in crowds or in small groups, but it most commonly is the fruit of personal contact and interaction between two “sympatic” individuals.

The power of suggestion works in a characteristic way, and works best in certain circumstances. A man who converts another person to his point of view through rational argument uses persuasion; one who does so by mere assertion, unsupported by argument, uses the power of suggestion. Suggestion, then, obviously operates most powerfully in certain circumstances which inhibit those opposing ideas which would quickly undermine and shatter its influence; complementarily, it can

only work when a certain relationship, conducive to the giving and accepting of suggestion, exists between the person making the suggestion and the person or persons receiving it. Thus, if we regard the person giving the suggestion as superior to us by virtue of his age, position, personality, education or any other distinguishing feature, we are more likely to accept his suggestion than if he is an equal or inferior. Again if the suggestion given is in keeping with our own, conscious or unconscious desires, hopes or ambitions, it is likely to win acceptance, even if made by an equal or by an inferior. It follows from the above principles that some people are more suggestible than others—those who are immature, weak, or sick in body or in mind, are much more likely to accept suggestions than those who are adult, educated and in good physical and mental health. But such is the force of suggestion, and so hidden, devious and powerful its workings that, if we are to judge by the overwhelming success of modern advertising, which has as its *raison d'être* in and derives its hidden power from man's infinite suggestibility, very few men and women are immune to suggestion, skilfully used.

The teacher by virtue of superior prestige, wide knowledge and experience and greater maturity cannot but exercise the power of suggestion in his day-to-day dealings with his pupils

“And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew  
How one small head could carry all he knew!”

Unfortunately many teachers are, to a greater or less extent, unaware of their great power of suggestion. And, alas, others, wittingly or unwittingly, exploit and abuse it to impose their views, opinions and beliefs upon their pupils. Teachers who, tacitly or openly, pose as being infallible; who expect their pupils to accept unquestioningly all their sayings as *Obiter Dicta*; who treat text-books and the written word in general as sacrosanct, and get their pupils to do likewise; who accept uncritically themselves, and pass on to their students the views and beliefs of so-called authorities, without questioning their credentials—such teachers are abusing the power of suggestion and teaching their pupils to worship idols. On the other hand, teachers who teach their students, especially the older and more mature ones, not to accept uncritically



views and opinions expressed by others, including themselves, and who free themselves and their pupils from the "tyranny" of print, are doing a fine job in gradually destroying the natural suggestibility of their pupils. The majority of teachers, unfortunately, exploit their power of suggestion to bolster up their own ego rather than in the best interests of their students, and were it not for the fact that, especially in adolescence, boys and girls tend to develop a strong power of "contra suggestion", more damage would be done than is in fact actually done in most schools.

In the school set-up, suggestion is not only exercised by teachers, but also by the tone and atmosphere of a class or the whole school, and by the powerful unwritten code of conventions and traditions concerning the things which are done, and not done, in every school. This largely unwritten code differs from school to school, but everywhere it exerts a powerful suggestive force on both teachers and pupils.

Sympathy and suggestion do not always operate together; when they do, they tend to lead to imitation, the third of the triad of dynamic forces through which society influences the development of the individual. A tendency to experience emotion sympathetically in the sphere of feelings, and to accept suggestion in the sphere of opinion and belief, almost inevitably lead to a tendency to imitate in the sphere of human behaviour. It is true that there can be imitation without sympathy or suggestion, but, by and large, if we feel alike and think alike, we tend to act alike. A child who loves his parents or feels affection for his teachers will not only echo their feelings and beliefs, but will also strive to imitate them and be like them in as many ways as possible. Such imitation may be unconscious, as when a child imitates almost instinctively the speech, behaviour, and even the mannerisms of a loved parent or a respected teacher; or, it may be consciously desired and sought after, and achieved, to a greater or less extent, after considerable effort as when a student is inspired to become a great scholar like his teacher or professor, or when a saintly Guru inspires his students to conquer themselves and achieve true self-realisation. Imitation is a powerful force in the hand of the individual teacher, and the staff of a school, for, consciously and discriminatingly utilised, it can

help to promote desirable patterns of behaviour, both inside and outside the class-room. Care must be exercised, however, by the teacher to ensure that the models set before the children do not have feet of clay! Children are quick to see through pretentiousness and hypocrisy of any kind, and many a teacher who sets himself up before his students as a model of intellectual and other virtues would be aghast if he knew what they really thought of him! The sensible teacher will, therefore, as soon as possible, direct children's minds and hearts away from himself to a consideration of the great men and women of history or of great literature, who are far more worthy objects of veneration and imitation. No true or lasting education of children and adolescents in the real sense of the word is possible unless, to quote Sir Richard Livingstone, we place before them "the habitual vision of greatness"; and by focusing students' minds and hearts on this vision as embodied in words, lives and actions of truly great men and women, a good teacher will sow the seeds of true greatness in his pupils. And he can leave them no greater legacy.

## V

### THE MISSING COMPONENT IN EDUCATION

EARLY in the thirties of the century Mr. A. S. Neill, the enfant terrible of the more staid and sober school of pedagogues, wrote a challenging book with the provocative title "Hearts, not Heads in the School." Mr. Neill's thesis was, briefly, that educators, in their zeal for training the minds of children, had neglected their hearts which, according to Mr. Neill, would play the dominant role in their later lives. Revolutions, he pointed out, were born in the hearts of men, reason coming on the scene to direct, guide, and, if possible, control the emotional explosion that alone makes a revolution possible; and he went on to make a passionate plea to all teachers to let their pupil's heads take care of themselves, and to concentrate their efforts on educating their hearts.

In his violent reaction against the "mental discipline" school of educators, Mr. Neill undoubtedly pushed his arguments in favour of the education of the emotions too far. But exaggeration apart, the main burden of his thesis is unassailable. The Heart is the "missing component" in much of modern education; far too much attention is concentrated on the mind, hence, only too frequently, children leave school with stuffed heads and starved hearts, with over-developed brains, and repressed and thwarted emotions which often result in disastrous repercussions later.

The "formal discipline" theory did not leave much leeway for the emotions; at best, they were regarded as a necessary evil, at worst as primitive and dangerous forces and impulses that must be rigidly curbed and repressed. Training the mind in the intellectual sphere, and the body in the physical, were accompanied by "breaking the spirit" in the emotional, which generally meant treating the child as a young and fractious colt whose potentially dangerous feelings and emotions had to be subdued so that they would not interfere, as they were so apt to do, with the 'disciplining' of his mind and body.

This attempt to repress and, if possible, to eradicate the human feelings and emotions has been, and still is largely responsible for the failure of modern education to deliver the goods! To attempt to isolate the emotions from the development of mind and body is impossible; to ignore them, or to attempt to repress them is little short of criminal. The emotions are the mainspring of action-feeling, thinking and willing are inseparable, three in one and one in three. To quote a well-known philosopher "You cannot know what you do not feel, even if you are told it a hundred times;" and, unless knowledge is set on fire by the heart, it will never issue in conviction and action for though reason controls, or should control, man's life, it is profoundly influenced by the feelings and emotions. "Reason plucks the strings but emotions are the sounding board which gives the music body, colour and a carry through".

Man at his best is a perfect blend of emotion and reason, with emotion playing a major role. An integrated, balanced, unified personality is not possible without proper control, utilisation and organisation of the emotions. "Emotions", says a famous psychologist, "are the basic element out of which all later mental powers arise. It is out of them that sentiments, attitudes and philosophies of life are built". Man is a rational animal, but his emotions have a great, sometimes a determining effect on his ways of thinking and acting. Indeed, the psycho-analytic school of psychologists go a step further; they claim that the emotions dominate man's life, and assign to reason the inferior role of providing "alibis" or "rationalizations" for the actions to which our often-unconscious, or semi-conscious emotions have driven us *vis a tergo*.

The "rationalization" theory is plausible, but, if accepted, would deprive man of all freedom, responsibility, and claim to be a "rational" animal. It is true that more often than we care to admit our emotions not only influence our thinking, but rule our actions; still the reason can and does normally keep the emotions under control; indeed, it is the rule of reason that distinguishes the educated man from the child and the savage. The psycho-analytic over-emphasis on the part played by the emotions in our everyday lives is, however, of abiding value in bringing out the close and intimate



connection between the affective, the cognitive, and the active life of man. Thinking is not something that goes on in the brain; it involves the whole mind, (of which affect is an important and indispensable element), and both thought and feeling, often inextricably intertwined, govern our will and our actions. Emotional health is accordingly important not only for right thinking and right doing, but is a vital element in the development of a complete and many-sided personality, and for normal scholastic progress. Hence the emotions must not be by-passed, cold-shouldered or damned, but effectively canalized, sublimated where necessary, and, tactfully used in the all-round development of the child's character and personality.

The physiology and psychology of the emotions have been much studied in the 2nd century. Prof. McDougall was probably the first to bring them into prominence by linking them with the 'instincts' as the raw materials of the human personality. His classical definition of an instinct as an "Innate psycho-physical disposition to perceive and pay attention to certain classes of objects, to experience in their presence an emotional excitement and an impulse to action" and his pairing off of his 14 instincts with the accompanying emotions, have since been questioned, but most reputable psychologists agree as to the inherited basis of the emotions and their intimate connection with what may be broadly termed "instinctive behaviour". The child is born with certain innate physiological mechanisms and psychological forces and impulses that predispose him to act in certain ways. "Instinctive behaviour" is much more complex and modifiable than Prof. Mc. Dougall considered it to be, but it is nearly always accompanied by strong emotional drives which have an inborn basis but are profoundly influenced by the environment. The emotions are, therefore, not abnormalities or mysteries—they are normal expressions of human activity which colour our thoughts and actions and are linked with organic changes in the body.

The intimate connection between the emotions and the internal workings of the body, especially the glands and the autonomic nervous system, has been given increasing prominence ever since Prof. William James and Prof. Lange

enunciated their famous theory that "Emotion is a state of mind that manifests itself by a perceptible state of the body," that Fear, for instance, is the intellectual awareness of the motion of running away from danger. Whether one admits this theory, (which to our way of thinking puts the cart before the horse), or not, there is no gainsaying that emotions have an organic basis which influences them to a great extent, while they in turn exercise a great influence on one's physical health and well-being. It is a well-established fact, for instance, that disagreeable emotions such as worry or fear produce emotional tensions and muscle tightness that results in such physical diseases as indigestion, migraine, insomnia and even gastric ulcers, and that the hormones secreted by the endocrine glands have an intimate connection with the strength and expression of certain emotions. Endocrinologists undoubtedly make extravagant claims when they attribute emotional excesses and instability merely to physiological causes, but they have done much good in emphasising the organic basis of the emotions, and providing a remedy for some emotional defects. All this weight of evidence only goes to prove that healthy emotions are a necessary pre-condition to a healthy body.

They are still more essential for mental health. The emotions can be helpful in the intellectual life of man; they can also be extremely harmful. Rightly educated they can drive 'a child or a man to achieve great things, mishandled, and not given adequate and proper expression in such a way as to produce emotional balance and health, they are the major cause of mental ill-health, backwardness, delinquency, and even lunacy of a type. Modern psychologists and psychiatrists, influenced by Freud and the Neo-Freudians, are inclined to find in the neglect, misdirection or repression of the emotions, especially in early childhood, the root of all later emotional difficulties, maladjustments and neuroses. Emotions need as delicate handling as high-explosives—to ignore their existence is as dangerous as being careless or offhand with such excessives. The Scylla and Charybdis of licence and repression must be avoided. Conscious self-control will, of course, often be necessary but total inhibition should seldom or never be the order of the day.

The happy mean is not easy to strike. If emotions are only partially expressed, the child may grow up psychologically handicapped, working, as it were, on only three of his six cylinders. If they are completely damned and repressed, they will probably drain away in fear, anxiety, guilt, inferiority, hostility and envy, and the emotional stress thus engendered will in many cases result in backwardness and maladjustment. Emotional deprivation often results in delinquency or in the formation of neuroses and complexes, whereas excessive emotional shock may lead to emotional defect and apathy which may make the child an institutional case. All these dangers must be avoided, the child's basic emotional needs—for love, security, adventure—satisfied, and his more primitive emotions such as excessive self-assertion, sex feelings and aggressiveness harnessed and found worthy outlets by transferring the energy they arouse to the attainment of goals of individual and social value. The child's emotions in short must not be strangled, but diverted into the right channels, for they supply the power and energy at the basis of all achievement and progress in the physical, intellectual and spiritual life of man.

The education of the emotions is essential for physical, mental and psychological health and well-being. "Love thy neighbour as thyself" must form, and is an indispensable and integral part of any balanced and all-round attempt to develop the personality of the growing child. The normality and completeness of that personality will depend in large measure on the possession by the child of the full range of primary and secondary emotions which given, wide and varied opportunities for expression, yet controlled and modified by being directed towards and centred round worthy objects, people and ideas into enduring and worthwhile interests, attitudes, sentiments and ideals which are the foundation of a noble character and a rounded and many-sided personality.

Further, one of the essential aims of education must be to harness emotional energy to socially desirable goals and values so that they are not frittered away in selfish individual satisfactions but geared to the good of society.

The burden of educating the emotions, and with their help,

developing those interests, attitudes, sentiments and ideas which supply the motives without which no true education is possible, rests mainly with the parents, and the schools, for the emotional health of children is conditioned largely by the adults with whom they come into close contact.

The parents lay the foundation by giving the child, and enabling it to give in return, that love and affection that are indispensable for the child's normal emotional growth and happiness.

The home is the first educator and a lifelong influence. "Whether the professional educator wishes it or not", says Prof. Olive Wheeler, "the fact remains that the home is the chief training ground of the emotions and consequently of the character. This is particularly true in the early years when sentiments are being formed and emotional attitudes are being set; it is also true of adolescence, when new emotions make their appearance, and a conflict between loyalties has to be solved. The love of parents and brothers and sisters, the give and take of a happy family, the intimacies possible only in a small natural group, life in an atmosphere of consideration for others, and respect for truth, beauty and goodness those are what are needed for the education of an individual's emotions."

The schools should continue their work by providing a healthy, rich and stimulating environment for the proper development, exercise, canalisation and sublimation of the child's emotions. The emotional tone and atmosphere of the school are vital factors in its success or failure. Schools must provide plenty of scope for happy and purposeful activity, which gives the student the thrill of adventure and achievement and enables him to assert himself in a manner beneficial to himself and the community. The teacher-pupil relationship is of vital importance—fundamentally it should be one of friendliness and co-operation. The teacher should employ the emotional forces of sympathy, suggestion and imitation to inculcate worthy ideas and ideals, and make a liberal use of praise and example to inspire pupils with worthy emotional drives, while sarcasm and ridicule should be banished from the class-room. As far as possible, the teacher should win the confidence and affection of his or her pupils, and use these



as motives to guide them to self-confidence, and independence, and service of the community. An individual study of each child to discover what emotional factors are hindering or blocking progress to emotional, physical or mental health and stability becomes imperative if this desirable state of affairs is to be promoted.

A good teacher must know how the minds of children work, and the mind, especially of a child, is a feeling as well as a thinking instrument. "Only someone who can feel his way into the minds of pupils", says Freud, "can be capable of educating them, and we grown-up people cannot understand children because we no longer understand our own childhood."

A complete and balanced school curriculum, which caters adequately for the emotions, must not only contain Humanities subjects like Literature and History which deal pre-eminently with human emotions, but, above all, with the Fine Arts like music, art and dancing which provide scope for the creative expression and enrichment of the human emotions. In India, unfortunately, when the Fine Arts find a place in the average school curriculum, they are only too often admitted on sufferance; they are regarded as the flowers and trimmings of education though, to quote the Crowther Report. Fifteen-Eighteen—"these are not flowers but roots". And even when grudgingly admitted as flowers, because the human need for them is so great that they cannot be completely excluded, the Fine Arts are, alas only too often, ill-tended and allowed to wither and die as the growing pressure of external examinations and the excessive demands of premature specialisation increase in the later years of schooling. This is great tragedy, for, to quote Prof. Peter Brinson, "we do not recognise the part the arts must play to balance an education whose emphasis is on intellectual achievement and craft skill. Should not the emotions receive schooling like the mind. The arts extend our knowledge of the emotions and our control over them. To practise and appreciate the emotions should be a necessary part of our emotional preparation for life. Without the arts we risk producing push-button scientists lacking the imagination which gives purpose to work." Without them, there can be no true education.

## VI

### A NEGLECTED FACTOR IN EDUCATION

FIFTY years ago education was identified with instruction in the elements of the 3R's; today it is more fully conceived of as education for the 4 H's: Hand, heart, head and health. Sincere efforts have been made in many schools in more progressive countries to achieve this fourfold objective; but in the majority of schools, especially in India, while lip service is paid to the 4 H's, in actual practice the concentration is on two of these aspects, to the total or partial neglect of the others.

The head is more or less adequately served in most schools which often over-emphasise mental discipline, the training of the mind, or, worse still, the memory to the partial or total neglect of the other three H's. Towards the beginning of this century the renaissance of the Greek Ideal of *mens sana in corpore sano*, and the realisation that a healthy body is a precondition for a healthy mind led to the admission of "physical gymnastics" to parallel the "mental gymnastics" of the class-room; and the belated realisation that the majority of ordinary children would have to work with their hands resulted in the grudging inclusion of "Handiwork" or "Manual Training" in the curriculum of the Elementary Schools. And, finally, in the last 25 years, due to the findings of the New Psychology, the education of the emotions has slowly gained some recognition in the curriculum and educational programme, though, as we have seen in the last chapter, very much more needs to be done before the education of the emotions takes its proper place in the total education of the child. But the primary and overwhelming emphasis is still on the head or the memory, so that, only too often, children leave them with overdeveloped brains, or, more correctly overburdened memories, but with relatively underdeveloped bodies and unschooled emotions, and, for the most part manually illiterate.

Indeed the hand is perhaps, by and large, the most neglected

factor in modern education in the vast majority of schools in India and abroad. It is true that due to the awareness of the need to furnish a corrective to the academic nature of formal education, "Handiwork", "Manual Training" or more recently "Crafts" figure on the Time-Table of schools today, but they are usually regarded as luxuries or frills and not necessities, as ornaments and extras not as a vital part of the total education of the child, and they are treated as such by parents, teachers and children! Despite the introduction of "activity education" in progressive schools abroad and of Basic education in our own country, the ancient Greek idea still persists that work with the hands is degrading and meant for slaves, or in our country for certain of the lower castes, despite the fact that ours is primarily a technical and industrial age, in which the vast majority of the people of any country live by working with their hands. Hence Handiwork in its various forms is not taken seriously, it is treated as a pleasant interlude from the more serious business of the school, or as something which is meant to be taken seriously only for the duller or more backward pupils in the school; and it is generally taught by teachers who do not know and care much about it, or by people who know but cannot teach it. The net result is that Handiwork, Manual training, Craft classes in most schools, even though they may produce an imposing array of articles for the annual Parents Day or Sale of Work, are largely a waste of precious time and materials, being neither ornamental nor useful from the educational point of view.

It is time this attitude underwent a radical change. To teach a child how to use his hands, skilfully, usefully and creatively is not merely a desirable adjunct to his education but an indispensable part of it. "The fundamental instinct of life is to create, to make, to discover, to grow, to progress; every child is born with the impulse to make things and to take joy in the making." Indeed the average and especially the below average child is much happier, and learns much quicker, when using his hands and his head, than when using his head only. Hence it is essential that this education should be accomplished not only by passively listening and memorising but by doing and finding out; that it should comprise not only knowledge and facts, but experiences and activities;

that it should consist not only of literacy and numeracy but of 'Work experience'. "Learning by doing" is as important as learning by listening; in the early stages it is perhaps much more important, because it is for the young child a more natural enjoyable and interesting mode of learning, and one which exercises more of his faculties than does a mere oral lesson.

Moreover, as many psychologists in recent times have pointed out, there is an intimate connection between the hand and the brain, between manual skill and experience and mental functioning and clarity of thinking. "The connection between intellectual activity and bodily is diffused in every bodily feeling, in the eyes, the ears, the voice, and the hands" says a famous psychologist. "There is a coordination of senses and thought, and also a reciprocal influence between brain activity and material creative activity. In this reaction the hands are particularly important. It is a moot point whether the human hand created the human brain, or the human brain the human hand, certainly the connection is intimate and reciprocal". Education through one's hands and of one's hands is an excellent method of instruction for all children; for many, perhaps the majority, it is the best, if not the only method. Many modern psychologists are of the considered opinion that what we broadly term "intelligence" is of more than one type; some children have an essentially "verbal intelligence", others an essentially "practical intelligence": some are "word-minded", rather than "hand-minded", others vice versa. John Duncan in his original study of "The Education of the Ordinary Child" claims that the intelligence of the majority of ordinary children runs in practical channels, and that a practical approach to the head through the hand yields far better results than a purely verbal approach. Besides its use for children who are predominantly "hand-minded", this practical approach has also been found to be of immense benefit for the re-education of delinquent children, and it has been long established that it is the only mode of approach for dull and backward children.

Education of, through and by the hand, therefore, is not only useful for certain types of children; it is, as the Kothari Commission emphasises, and should be an integral and indis-



pensable part of the total education of all children. Hence the Commission's repeated insistence that in order to balance and provide a corrective for the excessively formal educational current in most schools in India, Work experience should be an essential element, alongside literacy, numeracy and social service, in the pattern of general-cum-vocational education which it has laid down as the ideal pattern of school education in India in the years ahead. This Work Experience has been defined by the Commission as "any productive work in the school, home, farm or factory" which will involve both brain and brawn, both intellectual and manual effort, with an emphasis on the latter rather than the former.

This type of productive work, the Commission hopes, will remove the distinction between manual and intellectual work and integrate education with work, make entry into real work easier, and contribute immensely to national productivity. Manual and productive work, and effective training for it will also have other advantages. It will train the eye and hand and bring about that coordination of hand, eye and brain which are of such value in life and which are so lacking in most of the products of our excessively bookish schools. Handiwork, Crafts and Work Experience will also stimulate and give expression to the constructive and creative needs and impulses of children and restore a necessary balance to a curriculum overweighted on the intellectual side; they will increase a child's control over his environment by enabling him to enter into richer contacts with it, and, by so doing, increase his self-confidence, stir up his intellect, and provide a healthy outlet for his emotions; in short they will help to lay a sound foundation for his physical, emotional and mental health. And, finally, Handiwork, Crafts and other forms of Work experience will have a natural and spontaneous appeal to the interest of the child; this will increase the hold and the beneficial effect of the school on him, for once a child's basic attitudes to the school are favourable, because he finds it provides him with pleasurable and interesting activities, there is bound to be a carry-over to the harder and less interesting aspects of school life and training. "Let a youth", says Ruskin, "once learn to take a straight shaving off a plank, or draw a fine line without faltering, or lay a brick level in its

mortar, and lo, he has learnt a multitude of other matters which no life of man could ever teach him."

Education and training of the Hand can be of immense benefit, but only if it is properly conceived and handled. This implies that it must be given its rightful place in the curriculum, approached in the right spirit and with the right objectives in view, and taught in the right way, at the right time, by the right teachers.

The education and training of the hand should occupy a position of conscious importance in the curriculum, on a footing of equality with other aspects of education. While it can be given in connection with many subjects, such as geography or science, it should also have a definite and specific place on the Time-table. Since the terms Handiwork and Manual Training or even Craft tend to be somewhat narrowly interpreted, the suggestion of the Kothari Commission that they be replaced by the more comprehensive term 'Work Experience' is welcome. This in the early years will take this form of Craft or Handiwork, or Art-Craft which should, as the Secondary Education Commission insisted, form an essential part of the education of every child. But in later years it will become more intimately connected with productive work in the School Workshop or on the farms. To yield its full educational value Work experience, whether it takes the form of Art and Crafts or of Workshop practice, should be approached neither from a *laissez-faire* nor strictly utilitarian point of view; nor should it degenerate into the mere practice of basic techniques for their own sake. Appreciation and interest should be the keynote of the teaching and learning process; practice should be motivated by these incentives and should issue in creative productive work. Technical skill and the productive aspect of craft should as far as possible not be divorced from creative expression; the ideal should be to fuse the two so that the child may experience the joy and satisfaction that comes from exercising his manual skills in the creation of useful and beautiful objects. In the early years especially, the productive aspect of work experience should not be emphasised at the expense of the creative aspects; a more psychological approach would be to allow young children to experiment freely with a wide variety

of materials, to learn the creative possibilities of a variety of media, and, in adolescence, to teach them the technical skills involved in response to a felt need, i.e. when the children ask for the teacher's help to do a particular job more economically and effectively. Where Work experience is concerned it should also be remembered that regimentation and excessive utilitarianism will be fatal to creative teaching. Children should be free to choose their own type of handiwork or Work experience from as wide a variety as it is possible for the school to provide, and they should, under guidance from the teacher, be able to carry their chosen work as far as their interest and talents permit. "In a good school", states Ogden and Stuart in their useful *Handbook of Matter and Method in Education* "the class-room during handiwork lessons becomes a busy workshop where children, individually or in groups, are working at different things, in different materials and for different ends—but always their own purposes are operative and they themselves can judge of their work by seeking whether or not it has fulfilled their purpose. The adult, and often mistaken, standard of perfection is not called into play. Experiment, trial, choice are allowed free play. One has only to watch the concentrated zest and attention of children so engaged to be certain of the value of such methods". The author has been fortunate in observing such methods in application in the class-room in schools in the U.K. and U.S.A. and in a few schools in India, and is convinced that this progressive approach to Handiwork has more than justified itself in the enthusiasm and interest it arouses and in the skill which children acquire in a much shorter time than under the old methods, and in its creative and therapeutic efforts on the flowering of their personalities.

There is one caveat, however. The old methods and limited skills of Manual Training or Handiwork could be taught with comparative safety by any teacher with a minimum of knowledge and skill; the new methods, and the wide objectives of Work experience can only be handled by an expert craftsman, who is at the same time a good teacher with a sound knowledge of child psychology at the various stages of their development. G.B.S.'s dictum—"Those who can do, those who can't teach" may be partially true of teachers of academic subjects with

little harm done; it would be fatal if it were true of the teacher of all forms of Work experience. The good teacher in this field must be able both to do and to teach—a combination very rarely found in the same individual, for the best craftsmen are seldom able to impart their skill to others. Hence such teachers will have to be the masters not only of the skills and experiences they wish to share with the pupils, but will have to be put through a sound course of training to equip them to teach them. Only then will Work Experience, and through it the education of the hand come into its own, and achieve all that it is capable of achieving as a vital and indispensable factor in the total education of the child and as a golden link between education and life, between the school and the wider world beyond its walls.



## VII

### A HEALTHY MIND IN A HEALTHY BODY

THE results of a joint survey by the Carnegie Foundation for Adult Education and the Y.M.C.A. & Y.W.C.A. in the U.S.A. to determine what were the main youth and adult interests and pre-occupations revealed that good health ranked an easy first among the diversity of things which young people and adults wished to acquire and preserve. Similar surveys in other countries would probably reveal similar results. This is not surprising. Good health is one of the primary concerns of every man, woman and child, not only for its own sake but because it is an essential precondition for the physical, mental and spiritual well-being and happiness both of the individual and society. The popular instinct is right in linking together health, wealth and happiness; wealth and happiness in any country lie not in its factories and mines, its gold reserves or its favourable balance of trade, but in the physical, mental, moral and spiritual health of its citizens. Indeed, good health is of more than individual or communal significance; it is of fundamental importance for the future welfare of the world. "Peace and security", states the preamble of the Charter of the World Health Organization, "can be obtained only in a world community composed of countries whose people are physically and mentally healthy."

The extension of the connotation of the word "Health" to include mental as well as physical health is as old as the Greeks who linked together *Mensike & Gymnastique*, and the Romans who inherited their educational ideal of "*Mens sana in corpore sano*"—a healthy mind in a healthy body. It is only in our day, however, that the real significance of the intimate connection between the two, and the nature, extent and complexity of their mutual interrelation and interdependence have been clearly realised. Leaving aside his spirit for the moment, man is today not considered as a body plus a mind, but as a body-mind; his body is no longer conceived to be exercised exclusively in the gymnasium and on

the playing fields, and his mind in the class-room; the education of each is the coeducation of both. The effect of the working of the body-mind on the spirit, and its tremendous influence in shaping a man's character and actions have also been more clearly perceived in our age; and though certain schools of Endocrinologists and Behaviourists have tended to push their theories to extreme, and to deprive man of free will and of moral responsibility for his life's actions, their emphasis on the intimate relationship between the material and the spiritual elements in man has in many respects been a salutary one.

Body, mind and spirit form in man a unity in diversity; each influences the other and is in turn influenced by it, and in actions which are most truly human the three work together "three in one and one in three", in perfect harmony with one another. True health is, further, not merely the absence of diseases of body, mind and spirit; it is a state of complete physical, mental and spiritual individual and social well-being. Any complete scheme of physical and health education aiming to produce a healthy mind in a healthy body should endeavour, therefore, not merely to prevent or cure disease, but to create the best possible conditions for the promotion of sound physical and mental, individual and social health; as such it must have three interrelated aspects: Preventative, Curative and Positive.

Prevention, runs the old proverb, is better than cure; it is little use building and equipping good hospitals and schools if conditions outside them that make for bad health are allowed to continue unchecked. A sound and complete scheme of physical health education must aim therefore to discover and destroy the roots of children's physical and mental ill-health; these are partly hereditary but stem mainly from the physical, social and economic surroundings in which so many of them live and work, especially in India. Unless there is an immediate and far-reaching improvement in such vital interrelated fields of environmental hygiene as sanitation, housing, nutrition and recreation, it would be idle to look for any permanent improvement in our children's health, no matter how effective be the health education given at school.

In the curative department of health education the earliest

possible discovery of diseases, and provision of the latest and most up-to-date methods of treatment, are of most urgent importance. "The age from birth to five", stated Sir George Newman, a famous Director of Children's Health Services in the U.K., "is the susceptible age, physically and psychologically". Most of the physical and mental ills of adult life have their roots in the years of infancy, caused either genetically, or through faulty upbringing in the early years. Hence it is essential for a sound scheme of health education not to be limited to the confines of the school but to extend to the home, to educate the parents, and especially the mothers, to take all appropriate steps to safeguard the physical and psychological health of the immature child, and to provide them with facilities such as Crèches, Child Guidance Clinics, Maternity Welfare Centres and Nursery Schools and Classes for the proper and healthy upbringing of their growing children. Most of the damage to a child's physical and mental health is done by the time the average child reaches the school; much of it is caused by ignorance rather than indifference or viciousness on the part of the parents, hence the necessity for including education for parenthood in any complete scheme of health education.

Finally, true health is not something negative but positive, an all-round harmony and fitness of mind and body which enables a man to achieve the maximum good of which he is capable. The preventive and curative aspects of health tend to loom so large in schemes of health education wherever they exist in schools that its positive aspects are often lost sight of. Yet they are, in a sense, the most important. Every effort should, therefore, be made, and rich and varied facilities provided, to actively promote the physical and mental health of children by the provision of physical training, games play-centres, holiday camps, excursions etc. These should aim not merely to develop and coordinate the working of the body-mind and to bring about the flowering of man's moral and spiritual nature but also—and this is of the utmost importance in our dynamic complex age—to educate man to adjust himself to and to live happily in a rapidly changing environment.

It should be apparent that a comprehensive scheme of

physical and health education to cater for the preventive, curative and positive aspects of health cannot be carried to completion during the few years a child is at school: it should be a continuous process from the cradle to the grave, beginning in the home and continuing long after the child leaves school throughout his life. The home must occupy a central place in health education, for it is here that the foundations of the physical and mental health of the child are laid. Doctors, psychologists and psychiatrists are unanimous that the early years are the most important in a child's growth and development, and that the roots of most adult physical and mental disorders can be traced back to these years. Hence the necessity for specific care and attention during these years. On the physical side, healthy surroundings and adequate nutrition are of paramount importance; undernourished children will benefit little from even the best education, and it is a well-established fact that malnutrition is not only responsible for increasing the susceptibility of the child to children's diseases of various kinds, but that it frequently leads to mental backwardness and retardation and abnormalities as well. There is also definite need for plenty of light, air and sunshine, for a regular routine of eating and sleeping, and for training the child in hygienic habits. On the psychological side the basic requirements of the child are for love, security and adventure, and for a rich variety of play situations through which he can grow and develop physically and psychologically. It is the deprivation of these psychological necessities that is largely responsible for the "problem" maladjusted and delinquent children of later years.

The role of the school is complementary to that of the home in the education of the child for radiant health. To achieve this object it must not narrow down the health, education and training it provides to the provision of an infirmary, P. T., and a few games—as so many schools do—but to promoting the all-round psycho-physical growth and development of the child from infancy to youth—a vital span in the life history of the individual. The physical and health education provision of a good school consists of a well-planned and coordinated programme of knowledge, skill and activities and experiences designed to eliminate the seeds and conditions of



ill-health, and to actively promote the all-round, well-balanced physical and mental 'culture' of body, mind and spirit. Its general aim should not be to produce the mind of a giant in the body of a pygmy, or the mind of a moron in the body of a Sandow, but to educate the body to be the perfect instrument of the mind and the spirit, an instrument at once of self-control and of creative self-expression. To achieve this aim, several things are necessary.

An attractive, healthy school environment is the first prerequisite. The school buildings should combine beauty and utility, they should also be safe and sanitary with proper lighting, ventilation and toilet facilities, and adequate indoor and outdoor play-space. The limitation of the health programme in schools to an annual, perfunctory medical inspection must be replaced by much more thorough and comprehensive supervision of the children's health, and proper health records maintained which will give a bird's-eye view of the physical growth and development of the child throughout his school life. The early diagnosis and recognition of disease is of great importance where children are concerned, and adequate facilities for remedial treatment should be available, either in the school infirmary or in a local hospital near to the school. As most children in India suffer from malnutrition, or a deficiency of vitamins essential for their normal development, it would be an excellent idea to introduce the English practice of providing the children with a midday meal at school to ensure that they obtain the necessary balanced diet for healthy growth. Such meals, planned on scientific lines, would be an inestimable boon to millions of undernourished school children all over India.

Besides being provided with a healthy environment, children at school should also be given a definite course in physical and health education suited to their age and experience and the milieu in which they live. This course should be both theoretical and practical, consisting not only of facts to be learnt but of creative activities and experiences such as open air camps and excursions etc., which bring home to children the importance and the joy of healthy living. What is commonly termed P.T. or "physical training" will form an important element in the syllabus of health education—it

should be handled by an expert, taught in close conjunction with physiology and health science, and should consist not merely of mechanical drill but of exercises and games and in activities of all types which are enjoyable themselves and graded to the children's ages, capacities and interests. The cult of compulsory team games has been carried too far in many a school, and extravagant claims have been made for them. Team games are undoubtedly valuable, but they should not be forced on all children all the time so as to become a burden, or a penance. They should only be compulsory on two or three days a week; on the other days children should be free to choose their activity from a rich variety of individual and group games such as tennis, badminton, net-ball, quoits, table tennis etc., which are invaluable in teaching the finer points of muscle coordination and in promoting individual skill and development. Above all, the ideal should not be to produce immature muscle-bound Sandows or 'masculine' women; bodily strength is desirable but bodily grace, poise, balance and harmony are as much if not more, important, and creative activities as Eurhythmics and folk dancing form an integral part of any scheme of physical education in schools.

Surveying the overall position of physical education in India, the Kothari Commission has criticised the tendency of most current schemes of physical education to emphasise only its physical fitness value and to ignore its educational values. "It must be emphasised", states the Commission, "that such education contributes not only to physical fitness, but also to physical efficiency, mental alertness and the development of certain qualities like perseverance, team spirit, leadership, obedience to rules, mobilisation in victory and balance in defeat. The Commission goes on to lay down the following guidelines for satisfactory programmes of physical education in educational institutions of all kinds in India:

1. The physical education programme should be planned for desirable outcomes keeping in mind the interests and capacity of participants.
2. The traditional forms of play and physical activities that have developed in our country should receive due emphasis in the programme.

3. The activities promoted should develop in each child a sense of personal worth and pride.
4. A sense of sharing responsibility in a spirit of democratic cooperation should grow from experience on the playground and also in the gymnasium.
5. The programme should be within one's financial means.
6. The programme offered should supplement other programmes of education and not duplicate them.
7. The programme should reach all rather than a selected few.
8. Special instruction and coaching should be provided for students with talent and special aptitude.

The realisation of the vital importance of mental health and its intimate relationship with physical health is of comparatively recent origin. Partly due to hereditary causes but more often the results of faulty nurture in the early years, emotional disorders are on the increase among modern children; they are almost as common as physical defects and frequently do much more harm. Lack of security, a deprivation of love and adventure, frustration due to too much, too little, or inconsistent parental discipline, and unsympathetic treatment by adults are responsible for the maladjustments and delinquencies of most "problem children". These early maladjustments are frequently aggravated by mishandling at school which generally takes the form of bad teaching methods, harsh discipline or unsatisfactory pupil-teacher relationships. Children need to be protected against both physical and mental maladjustments; and, by sympathetic handling in school or in extreme cases, remedial at Child Guidance Clinics, helped to rid themselves of those psychoses and complexes which are stunting or warping their physical, mental and spiritual growth and welfare. Older children can also be taught the elements of Mental Hygiene so that they can learn to control and sublimate their more dangerous and primitive impulses and to rid themselves of common frustration and inhibitions. A proper pupil-teacher relationship and a happy and cooperative home-school partnership are the best keys to the solution of most children's emotional problems and to the promotion of their mental health and development.

In order that this all-round physical education and mental health of the child may be promoted, it is essential that the teachers should be healthy themselves as well as knowledgeable and skilled in the arts that make for healthy growth and living. Every teacher should know at least the elements of physical and mental hygiene and teach them by word and example; in addition every school should have one or more part-time or whole-time experts—a physical education teacher, a resident nurse for the infirmary and if possible a visiting Doctor and psychologist. These experts should not be treated as “Outsiders” but brought into the daily life of the school so as to become real, integral members of the staff. Much of the health education given at school will be wasted if the home environment is undesirable and unhealthy or the parents ignorant or indifferent hence every effort should be made to link school and home, through parent-teacher associations, so that the influence of the school may permeate into and transform the homes, and the education given to the children may be extended to include their parents as well.

A comprehensive programme of physical and health education, such as we have endeavoured to outline above, will do much towards bringing about in every child that true “*mens sana in corpore sano*” which was the chief glory of the citizens of ancient Greece and Rome. Radiant health is the greatest blessing an individual can enjoy, and the well-being, the greatness and the progress of a nation depends in large measure on the health of its citizens. India can never aspire to be an ‘A’ nation while the health of her citizens, especially of her children and young people who will have to build the India of tomorrow, remains C3.



## VIII

### THE ROLE OF GAMES AND ATHLETICS IN THE SCHOOL

To the Greeks must go the credit for being the first to clearly perceive the intimate relationship that exists between the body and the mind, and to stress that the education of the body was, not only as important as, but, a pre-condition to the education of the mind and spirit. 'Gymnasium' was an essential part of a Greek liberal education, and physical training, games and athletics played a vital and integral part in the education of Athenian and Spartan children though the objectives aimed at were different, the former aiming at the promotion of the grace, harmony and proportion of the human body, the latter at bodily strength and brute force. 'Greece captured, took captive Rome' in the educational sphere, and "mens sana in corpore sano" became the ideal of Roman educators, who strove after a balanced development of the mind and body. This ideal persisted till the Renaissance and Reformation when an overemphasis on books and on 'mental discipline' upset the balance; the arduous regimen of Greek and Latin left little time for such 'frivolities' as games and athletics, which languished till they were revived by Dr. Thomas Arnold at Rugby in the 19th century to become an important element in the Public School tradition. Our modern approach to games and athletics dates from this time.

Dr. Arnold apparently had no clear conception of the real function of games and athletics in the school curriculum; for him they were merely a channel through which boys could release surplus energy, and a means of keeping them out of mischief! Later Public School Heads, like Thring of Uppingham and Butler of Shrewsbury, realised that organised games could do much more, and began using them as an instrument of self-discipline and character building. Most Public School Heads thus came to regard games and athletics from the moral as well as the physical standpoint, and laid perhaps more stress on the value of promoting through them the

ideals of "playing the game, team spirit, and esprit de corps" than their value in building healthy bodies, though they were not blind to this aspect.

The growth of the competitive spirit of the Darwinian era in education, unfortunately, made games and athletics loom larger and larger in the Public Schools, till they became a serious obstacle to the realisation of their intellectual values. Organised games became a fetish and athletics a cult, both at the Public Schools and at the Older Universities which tended to glory more in their records on the games and sports fields than in the realm of scholarship! The wheel had indeed come full circle. The Public Schools led the way, other schools in England and in other parts of the world, in the Dominions and Colonies, and to an even greater extent in the U.S.A., followed in their footsteps with the result that today games and athletics form a prominent feature of the education given by progressive schools all over the world.

India is no exception. Today every school acknowledges in theory, though they may not be always able to realise it in practice, that games and athletics are a necessary part of every child's education. Unfortunately, however, even where games and athletics exist in schools, either because of the lack of clear conception of their role in the school, or because of lack of adequate planning, much of the energy expended on them by staff and boys is relatively wasted; indeed, they are often not only less useful than they could be, but a positively harmful element in the curriculum of the schools. Games and athletics, properly organised and used, because of their natural and almost universal appeal, can be one of the finest educational forces in the school; abused they can often be a menace rather than a boon.

It may seem strange to talk of the necessity of a "philosophy" of games and athletics. Yet, unless we develop such a conscious philosophy, a philosophy which is quite clear to the staff, the parents, the boys and the community, and unless we deliberately strive to realise this philosophy in action in our programme of games and athletics, we will never get from them all that they are capable of contributing to the all-round education of the child.

The first principle that should underline a school programme

of games and athletics—it seems almost superfluous to state it, and yet the obvious is often overlooked!—is that they exist for the child and not vice versa. Games and athletics, as much as studies, must be child-centred; the child must be the focus, and his physical, intellectual and moral welfare their *raison d'être*. Hence in deciding such important matters as how much time should be allotted to games and athletics, which particular games or sports should be encouraged, and how they should be organised, we must use the all-round welfare of the child as our touchstone and our frame of reference.

Further, games and athletics should not be planned only to promote physical fitness; their wider intellectual and socio-moral values must not be lost sight of. Physical development is inseparable from mental culture, “the education of the body and the mind”, to quote Prof. Jacks, “must always be coeducation”; and the socio-moral values of games, their power of inculcating self-discipline, selflessness, the sporting spirit and *esprit de corps* are too well known to need further emphasis. Unfortunately, in the author’s considered opinion, these values have been and are either overexaggerated or neglected to a large extent.

Thirdly, the educational purpose should be supreme in the planning of a proper programme of games and athletics. This will be admitted in theory by all School authorities; in actual practice, it is usually a poor second to the main, though not openly professed objective of athletics and games in a school, which is to win glory and renown for the School by the breaking of records at Inter-school contests or the production of a First Eleven which will win the Local Schools’ Championship! Such an objective inevitably leads to an excessive concentration on the few rather than the many, in the overcoaching of the champions and the First Eleven and the comparative neglect of the vast majority of the boys of the school, whose participation in games and athletics is usually confined to cheering the school heroes to victory from the sidelines! This uneducational attitude was condemned by the Educational Policies Commission in the U.S.A. in a recent Report on “Moral and Spiritual Values in the Public Schools.” “Too often”, stated the Commission, “the physical and moral development of the individual players are allowed

to become secondary to the winning of games. The Sports programme should be guided by the aims of the fullest development of individual capacities and of moral and spiritual values for all children. The welfare of the children and not the athletic record of the school is the first consideration."

Schools in India, many of which are tending in the same direction, would do well to heed the Commission's salutary words of warning. The games and athletics programme must, it cannot be too often emphasised, cater for the needs of *all* the boys in the school not a privileged few; there must be something in it to suit all tastes and needs, and it should allow the widest possible scope for individual differences. This does not mean the budding champions or First Eleven players should be neglected or levelled down to parity with the others. It does mean that there should not be excessive attention given to them, nor should they be overstrained in the interests of the school, or the good of the majority sacrificed to their development; special attention is their due, but not at the expense of the average child, and, at the other end of the scale, special provision should be made for the physically backward and defective.

To cater for all the children in the school and for individual differences, the programme for games and athletics should be as comprehensive and varied as possible; it should balance team games with group games, and those in which the stress is on individual skill and prowess, such as tennis or swimming; and it should include both organised games and athletics, and unorganised games, hiking etc.

The controversy about the desirability or undesirability of compulsory games and athletics will, perhaps, never be finally resolved. A certain measure of compulsion may be necessary for some children at certain times, and may even be desirable. For the most part, however, children should not be excessively regimented or compelled to play certain types of games; compulsory games like hockey, football or cricket, once or twice a week, should be sufficient, for the rest of the week children should be allowed free choice of games and athletics so long as they are engaged in some form of recognised physical activity. And the stress both in games and athletics should be on their sportsmanlike and pleasurable aspects,



and on doing one's best at all times, rather than on breaking records or winning tournaments. Finally, there should be as much attention paid to the vitally important pre-training aspect of games and athletics as on actual performances.

A common fallacy current in most schools is that the mere provision of games and athletics and ensuring pupil participation in them, will in some mysterious way produce the beneficial results and the consummation devoutly wished for by their sponsors. Nothing could be further from the truth. An unplanned provision of and haphazard participation in games and athletics will not automatically promote the desired physical, mental and moral development in the children. Heads and Games' Masters must be quite clear as to their goals and orientate and direct the games and athletics programme in the school to achieve clearly foreseen ends. Their general aim should be as stated above—to promote the maximum possible physical, mental and moral well-being of all the children in a school,—and the choice of activities and the relative stress placed on them should always be governed by this principle. Again, in each particular game or athletic event, the immediate attainable physical, mental and moral objectives will be different; the authorities should be quite clear what they are, and ensure that the particular activity promotes them as effectively as possible, with the least possible harm or human wastage.

Finally, there are the vexed problems of balance, proportion and integration. Games and athletics should not constitute an isolated and self-contained programme, they should form a dynamic and integral part of the total school programme for health and physical education, and hence planned in close correlation with subjects and activities like dietetics, personal and social hygiene, gymnastics, and physical training. And, together with these and other related aspects of Health education in its widest sense, games and athletics must be placed in due perspective with regard to the rest of the curriculum. Games and athletics are not mere ornaments or extras in the school; if treated as such, they will lose most of their value and may even be positively dangerous due to over-emphasis or neglect. They are an intimate and integral part of the total education of the school, and should be carefully

integrated and coordinated with the curriculum proper, and the social, moral and spiritual tone, discipline and ethos of the School. Then, and only then, will they fulfil and justify the prominent place they occupy in the modern school, and prove to be a boon rather than a menace to the children.

## IX

### THE EDUCATION OF CHARACTER

THE alarming growth of crime and corruption, the rising tide of juvenile delinquency and student indiscipline in School and College, and the insidious and ubiquitous moral rot that has been slowly but surely undermining the very foundations of private and public life and morals in our country since Independence have cumulatively led to what our late Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru aptly described as a "Crisis in Character" in free India. This "crisis in character" is confronting in varying degrees other countries besides ours, but in few others perhaps is the crisis so deep-rooted and widespread, for it has affected all sectors and segments of the people from the leaders at the top to the masses at the bottom of the economic, socio-political leader. And in fewer still is the crisis so grave and dangerous, for we have still to consolidate and vindicate our independence, and the great and prosperous country, which we are straining every nerve to build, can only be built on the firm human foundation of men, women and young people of character and integrity for as the Chinese proverb puts it

"If you wish to plan for one year, plant grain

If you want to plan for ten years, plant trees

If you want to plan for a hundred years, plant MEN"

Our greatest and most urgent need, therefore, today is not for more capital, better machinery, or more abundant natural resources, important though these be; nor is it for more scientists, engineers or technologists, our greatest need is for more good men and women.

This point was emphasised by our President Dr. Radhakrishnan in a recent speech "We may" he stated, "build all the dams in the world, improve our economic status and internal standard of living, yet all will be useless if we fail to pay proper attention to the spiritual and moral development of our citizens, for it is on their integrity that the foundation of our national progress depends". Our prime need, in

short, is for men, women and young people of character and integrity; we have enough clever youth and adults, what we need is more disciplined, morally sound young people and adults. And of the two it is the youth who are more important, both because they are more educable, and because in their hands lies the destiny of the nation. Hence it was not surprising that the Secondary Education Commission (1954) in its historic report came to the considered conclusion that "the supreme end of the educative process should be the training of the character and personality of the students in such a way that they will be able to realise their full potentialities and contribute to the well-being of the community."

The character formation of the younger generation is a task, therefore, of fundamental and paramount importance for the future well-being and prosperity of our infant republic; and the responsibility for the effective promotion of the objectives must devolve on all those adults who come into contact with children from birth to maturity, on parents, on teachers, and on the community at large, it must be a shared responsibility of the Home, the School and Society as a whole. For while the basic instincts, appetites, aptitudes and abilities with which the child is born form the raw material of character yet it is the creative and shaping force of the various milieux in which the young child finds himself from childhood to manhood that play the predominant role in the nature of his character. Character formation is therefore primarily a function of education and training—"train up a child in the way he should go that when he is old he shall not depart from it." And this education of character is, as we have stressed earlier, a joint venture and a creative partnership of three main agencies—the Home, the School and the Community as a whole.

The home is the nursery and the training ground of character, parents are the greatest and most enduring formative influences in the character training of the child. This fact has been stressed in a previous chapter, so there is no point labouring it here. We will only re-emphasise that the young child is the father both of the adolescent and of the man, and the seeds of many an adult failure of character are sown in the vital early formative years spent at home in which the founda-



tion for the later character development of the child are laid, well or ill.

The home is the earliest and most potent influence on the character training of the child; it continues to be, even after the child is sent to school, a powerful force, and if there is, as so frequently happens, a conflict of values and influences and a tug-of-war between home and school, it is almost always the home which wins the unequal struggle. This obvious platitude should be borne in mind both by heads and teachers who not infrequently suffer from exaggerated notions as to their influence in moulding the character of pupils, and by their critics who tend to blame the current "crisis in character" among the youth almost entirely on the educational institutions they are attending. "In the sphere of moral education" states Prof. Lester Smith "the school shares its responsibilities with numerous other institutions of which the family is the most important. Moreover, the school's responsibility is much less than that of the family in this respect. There is a danger of regarding the school as a modern Atlas to whom is entrusted the bearing of the whole task of the formation of man."

While we must be aware that the school has a limited role in character education, we must never forget that it is a vital one, and that every school has the duty to contribute towards the moral and spiritual development of its pupils. Till the child comes of age for school, the home is the only influence shaping the character of the child; but the moment he enters its portals the school must begin to share this vitally important responsibility. Teachers are now in loco parentis, which surely means that they are partners of the parents not substitutes for them, and as such they have to co-operate with the parents in the all-round education and character training of the child. This implies that the school must seek to promote not only the child's intellectual growth, but also his emotional, moral and spiritual development, in short the education and training of his character. This indeed is the principal *raison d'être* of a good school, for, to quote Prof. John Grinnell, "Character building is a prime responsibility of the school..... it is more than an objective in education—it is the very heart of education. Nothing else is worth having in education without rich, significant character."

This point of view has been emphasised by the Sri Prakasa Committee in their report on "Moral and Religious Instruction in Schools". After pointing out that "Something has gone wrong in our educational institutions" which has led to growing indiscipline, frustration and wastage among students, the Committee stresses the vital truth that the aim of all educational institutions in the country is primarily to "produce young men and women of good and sound character—disciplined, responsible and trust-worthy, fit citizens of a free country", by the deliberate inculcation of moral and spiritual values, not only by the home and by the community to which the pupils belong but also, as the influence of the home and the community is tending to decrease daily, increasingly by the Schools.

The Kothari Commission has wholeheartedly endorsed the Sri Prakasa Report. Painfully conscious of the fact that in India today "at a time when the need to cultivate a sense of moral and social responsibility in the rising generation is paramount, education does not emphasise character formation and makes little or no effort to cultivate moral and spiritual values", the Commission goes on to strongly recommend that "conscious and organised attempts should be made for imparting education in social, moral and spiritual values with the help, whenever possible, of the ethical values of great religions", with a view to solving the present crisis of character in Indian life and education.

From the beginnings of recorded history, schools, both in India and abroad, have been aware of their responsibility in the matter, even though they have not always measured up to their responsibilities.

Winchester, the first of the famous English Public Schools, took for its motto the proverb "Manners (morals) makyth the man," and even today the Public Schools glory in the fact that their first and foremost educational objective is not to produce scholars, but "Christian gentlemen" of real character and integrity. Schools in India and elsewhere, at least in theory, have always acknowledged the fact that one of their main functions is to form and shape the character of their pupils, and most of them still do, but, unfortunately their devotion to this ideal seldom goes much beyond lip service!

They pay eloquent tribute to the high ideal in words, but their hearts are set on lesser and meaner objectives like cramming their children for public examinations, or winning Inter-school games and athletic competitions!

The causes for this failure to discharge their prime responsibility to their pupils on the part of the schools are many and complex. The inability of the schools to attract and retain teachers with a sense of real vocation; the acute shortage of time and the growing pressure of overcrowded curricula and syllabuses, the almost total lack of parental cooperation, and the false criteria set up by parents and the community who judge the worth of a school almost solely by its examination results and victories in the field of competitive games and athletics; hostile and powerful community influences, like the radio, cinema, the press and political parties, and the warped values of the commercial and adult world outside their walls—these are a few of the more important and more obvious. But, perhaps, one of the principal causes why schools fail to discharge adequately their vital responsibility to be training grounds for character is because they are not always clear or convinced about the best means of promoting the character education and training of their pupils.

A discussion of some of the most effective ways and means by which schools can promote the character education of their pupils would therefore not be out of place. The expression "education of character" has been used in the title of this chapter in place of the more common "Character training" deliberately because it is a wider and more satisfying concept than the narrow term—character training. One tends to think of the word training today in connection with animals—as a process of teaching them certain tricks or how to form certain good habits and avoid bad ones which follow from a blind obedience of its native instincts and impulses. Since man is to a large extent "a bundle of habits", character training in the sense of worthwhile habit formation is an essential part of the education of character, for good habits, as William James pointed out, are the raw material of a good character.

Habit formation, however, is not the whole of character education, for even good habits in time tend to become

mechanical and formal and to lose their inner force, sanction and vitality and by degrees their moral significance. The education of character involves, moreover, not only good actions, but the right motives and sanctions, hence it must be based on a clear knowledge of and conviction about the eternal verities, Truth, Beauty and Goodness, a love for them, and a determination to embody these perennial ideals in our thoughts, words and actions. True education of character, in short, involves the education of the whole man, physically, mentally, emotionally, morally and spiritually; if these diverse and often conflicting aspects of the whole man are not co-educated to work in balance and harmony, a more or less unbalanced character education will result. For, while character education is primarily concerned with the volitional aspect of the human personality, it will neglect the intellectual and affective elements of his personality at its peril.

The education of character, it cannot be too often emphasised is education of the whole man, not merely a part of him, however important that part man be. 'Education' said Ruskin "does not consist in teaching a man what he does not know but to behave as he does not behave." This is an excellent summing up of the objective of character education, for actions speak louder than words, and the acid test of a man of good character lies not so much in what he thinks or feels or says, but in what he does. Right action, however, is the fruit of right thinking and feeling, for man being a rational animal constantly endeavours, though he may not always succeed, to live according to his principles and beliefs.

Creed determines conduct, a man's dogmas tend to shape his life, and where a man consistently violates his beliefs by his actions, he will ere long rationalise his actions by modifying his beliefs to justify them, even if it means holding a view directly contrary to what he held before. The rather naïve idea, therefore, that it does not matter what a man believes so long as he does what is right does not hold much water, a child or an adult must be taught what is right before he can do it. Moral instruction or fundamental ethics must therefore be made an essential and integral part of the core



curriculum in every school. It is true that many well-established and commonly held ethical and moral principles are in a process of flux today, still there are certain fundamental beliefs concerning honesty, truthfulness, *ahimsa*, our rights and duties towards God, our fellow men, ourselves and the State, which all men and women of good will, irrespective of caste, creed or community, would agree upon. These could be incorporated in an "Agreed Syllabus" of moral instruction acceptable by the vast majority of parents.

Such a compulsory, basic course of moral instruction for all pupils is included in the curriculum of Anglo-Indian and Public Schools, and of many privately managed schools in India today; the move has not only been almost universally welcomed by parents, it has helped these schools to lay a sound basis for the discipline for which they are justly famous. Taking note of this fact, the Sri Prakasa Committee has recommended (and the Kothari Commission has endorsed this recommendation) a course in moral instruction for all pupils in all schools in India, whether under State or private management. Recognising "the fundamental importance of spiritual and moral instruction in building of character", the Committee stressed the urgent need, "for developing a better sense of values and qualities of character in all Indian young people of both sexes", and went on to add "we have no manner of doubt that it is most desirable that provision should be made for the teaching of moral and spiritual values in educational institutions. We also think it quite feasible, and even if there are some difficulties, they must be surmounted."

It must be admitted that the difficulties and obstacles that stand in the way of the implementation of this far-sighted proposal are formidable, yet if we are convinced that without moral instruction the curriculum of a school will be attenuated, impoverished and incomplete, and its products like ships without rudders or a map of life and lacking in strength and integrity of character, we will undoubtedly find ways and means of overcoming the practical difficulties that may arise along the way.

The mere provision of an agreed course of moral instruction, however, skilfully drawn up, will not however achieve

much. "Very much" as the Sri Prakasa Committee insists, "will depend upon the atmosphere that only good teachers can create and maintain." Hence moral instruction classes must be given by carefully selected and trained teachers who have been imbued with the conviction that, though it is a non-examination subject, moral instruction is at the heart of the "core Curriculum" which every boy and girl must study with a view to preparing themselves to be good citizens and good men and women. And it hardly needs to be added, such teachers must be trained to shoulder their great responsibility, and must not teach the subject in a dull monotonous way as a collection of abstract and arid moral principles but in a living and dynamic manner, making use of all the modern techniques which the flourishing modern methodology of teaching has placed at their disposal to clothe the dry bones of ethics with flesh, blood and vitality, and to illustrate how they can and should be embodied in our daily living.

Live teaching will do much to make moral instruction a live subject. But practised by itself, however attractively presented, will achieve little unless it is practised by those who teach it, for an ounce of practice is worth a ton of precept. "Example speaks louder than words", and unless the teacher of moral instruction, and indeed all teachers, parents and all adults with whom the child comes into contact daily, are living examples of the moral truths they preach, their words, however inspiring, will fall on stony ground and yield little fruit. A "Do what I say, but don't do what I do" policy is fatal where the education and training of character is concerned! The key importance of the teachers in the education of character has been vividly emphasised in the report 'Half Our Future' issued by the Central Advisory Board of Education in England, popularly called the Newsom Report. "The staff of a school," states this Report, "is the biggest group of adults the pupil meets, it comprises those most obviously set in front of them as guides into the world of men. Teachers can only escape from their influence over the moral and spiritual development of their pupils by closing their schools. As long as they teach at all, whether they give formal lessons or not, they teach by the way they behave, by what they are. That is why one of the obviously essential qualities of a teacher is integrity."

The Kothari Commission also stresses the influence of the personality and behaviour of teachers in moulding the character of the pupils and stresses:

"It is not only the teacher in charge of moral instruction who is responsible for building character. Every teacher, whatever subject he teaches, must necessarily accept their responsibility". Character shapes character, no one can give what he had not, and the greatest and most enduring influence on the shaping of the students' character is not what a teacher says, but what he feels, thinks and does, in brief what he is. For what a teacher is is reflected in everything he does, and in his relationships with the young people with whom he comes into daily contact, and however much a man tries to pull the wool over its eyes by high sounding precepts and sentiments, youth has an uncanny and unfailing ability to distinguish truth from falsehood, sincerity from hypocrisy, practice from profession, and integrity from meretriciousness. In the formation of their own characters young people need living models to emulate rather than dead precepts, and Heads and teachers, whether they like it or not and whether they are conscious of it or not, are serving as models, good, bad or indifferent for their pupils. Indeed, in the last analysis, what every teacher teaches is not English or History or Mathematics, but himself. This self-evident truth is given eloquent expression to in the Mudaliar Report on Secondary Education. "The school" states this Report "will be earnestly interested in the problem of moral and social training, but will not hug the fond illusion that this training can be provided through lessons in morality or civics or exhortations by the teachers and Headmasters on important occasions. It will fully utilise the only two media through which the character and personality can be really formed, the living force of personal example, and the organisation of every single item of school work in such a way that it will have the desired impact on the personality of the pupils. The teachers will realise that they cannot train character or inculcate discipline in their students unless they set before them an effective example of personal integrity, social sense and discipline."

The realisation that he is, willy-nilly, serving as model for his pupils may come as an unpleasant jolt to many a teacher,

and, conscious of his many weaknesses and frailties, he may be tempted to despair. There is no need to do so, for a clever teacher can share his responsibility with others by directing the attention of his pupils away from himself to worthier models by making them acquainted with the lives and deeds of the great men and women of the past and present who will inspire them to go and do likewise.

"Moral education", according to Sir Richard Livingstone, "is impossible without the habitual vision of greatness," and by bringing our pupils into intimate contact with great men and women, living and dead, in real life and in literature, we can provide them with a gallery of worthy models whom they can emulate in moulding their own lives and characters. A well-planned course in moral instruction, imaginatively taught, good example from teachers who are respected because they at least honestly endeavour to practise what they preach, and living, inspiring contact with great men and women, past and present, who shine from the pages of world literature and history will do much to mould the character of the younger generation. But even these are not enough, for, while we can learn much from the teaching and example of others, yet ultimately the finest and most enduring lessons are those we learn from our own experience. With this end in view, the entire corporate life of the school, in class and out of class, which is a potent influence in character formation must be organised in such a manner as to give the students abundant opportunities to learn by doing and by their own experience to behave in the right manner.

The Kothari Commission lays great stress on this fact, that education of character should be given by direct and indirect methods, by suggestion as well as discussion and teaching, "We attach great importance", says the Commission, "to the role of indirect influence in building up good character. The school atmosphere, the personality and behaviour of the teachers, the facilities provided in the school will have a large say in developing a sense of values. We would like to emphasise that the consciousness of values must permeate the whole curriculum and programme of activities in the school." And it proceeds to add "A sense of purpose should inspire all school activities and must be reflected in the life, tone and



atmosphere of the school. The School Assembly, the curricular and co-curricular activities, the celebration of religious festivals of all religions, Work experience, team games and sports, subject clubs, Social service programmes—all these must help in inculcating the values of cooperation and mutual regard, honesty and integrity, discipline and social values.”

While such education and training is possible to some extent in Day schools, it is perhaps best imparted in Residential schools. Indeed it is this aspect of the education provided by the famous English Public schools, and other residential schools modelled on them in various countries including India; that is their crowning glory. “The aim of Public schools”, says Mr. John Wilson in his stimulating book *Public Schools and Private Practice* is to form character and develop intelligence, and the character training they give is embodied in the Public school conception of the school as a society in which the art of living with others provides the best form of character training, the school being a microcosm of the wider microcosm outside. “A good school,” Mr. Wilson insists, “must provide a social life or community in which the individual may feel he has a real share and for which he may feel a genuine responsibility. He needs a society of people about his own age in the activities of which he may take a share equal to that of any other member, so that it may reasonably claim his loyalty and he may have the sense of being wanted in it. Nothing else will draw out from him the latest potentialities of his nature.”

Deep conviction, born of first-hand experience and of love of the supremacy of moral values, and the necessity no matter how difficult it may be, to always act in accordance with one's convictions, which alone will provide a youth or an adult with the incentive and moral sanction to enable him to discipline his wayward passions and appetites and develop a good character can, in the author's considered opinion, ultimately only come from a spiritual outlook and a religious source, from a belief in the Omnipotence of God and in the essential brotherhood of man as children of a common Father and heirs of a common destiny. It is an illusion to believe that morality outside religion will prove to be the answer to our problem of moral instruction, or to attempt to build

civic education upon a secular moral code or a code of political duty upon enlightened social morality. "The modern individual", to quote Prof. M. Ruthnaswary, Ex. Vice-Chancellor of Annamalai University, "with his normal egoism and self-centred will will never be curbed except by a Power that is above and outside him. The modern State with its powerful organisation and a will to wealth and power can never be moralised and civilised, except by a power that can dictate to it from outside. Morality without the support of religion would be a paper constitution. It would be bereft of that high incentive and nervous courage which is necessary if morality is to be fertile in action which only religion can give. It is in religion that morality is enriched and becomes perfect. Religion is the most perfect sanction of morality. Moral instruction deprived of the religious motive and inspiration has proved a broken reed."

The Shri Prakasa Committee was in substantial agreement with the above point of view. Lamenting that "many of the ills that our world of education and our society is suffering today are mainly due to the gradual disappearance of the hold of the basic principles of religion in the hearts of the people", the Sri Prakasa Committee added, "Religion through the ages has influenced all departments of life. It has inspired man to express all that is best in him. A great part of culture and humanity, and most of the traditional values that contrive to influence human conduct have been shaped by religion which even today is one of the most powerful influences in our society. We should recognise this fact and plan accordingly."

Indeed any attempt at moral instruction or character training which does not have a firm religious and spiritual basis will be founded on sand "and the winds came, and the waves, and great was the fall thereof." Hence, to quote the inspiring words of Sir Richard Livingstone, "Our education today should not be satisfied with imparting the information which a pupil requires, equipping him for a vocation, and teaching him how to use his mind. It should send him out with a definite spiritual attitude to life, and the material and basis for a definite philosophy of living. Our fundamental and chief task in education today is to form the right attitude

to life and to give what our age lacks—clear values and definite standards. Standards, values, the science of good and evil—to implement these is the essential part of education”. And he adds the significant truism, “There is one field in which every being can create the first rate—the field of character. The great virtues are not limited to genius, they are within the reach of all.”

## X

### AUTHORITY AND FREEDOM IN EDUCATION

THE rapid growth and spread of the democratic ideal in our day, with its tendency to overemphasise individual liberty and play down authority, and the identification of authority with 'authoritarian' regimes and attitudes, have made the concept and function of authority suspect in every sphere of life. The keynotes of the democratic ideal are a fervent belief in the uniqueness and sanctity of the human personality, and in the liberty of the individual to develop that personality to its highest potential, and with the realisation of both these ideals, the concept of authority appears to be in direct conflict. Hence authority has been largely banished from many spheres of life; both in the home, and in the school, the two main educational agencies in the life of the average child, 'authority' is suspect, and in actual practice is either non-existent, or has been whittled down and diluted to such an extent that, while its influence on the education of the child is gradually diminishing, its effective influence on the education of the adolescent is rapidly disappearing altogether. Freedom is the new shibboleth in the educational world, almost complete freedom for the child from all restraint of parents or teachers, so that he can 'express himself' and develop his personality, without let or hindrance! In such a context, any mention of the role of authority is suspect, for it is regarded as an obstacle to the free, full and many-sided growth of the child's personality.

The extreme libertarianism, verging upon licence, of many 20th century educational theories is a natural, though extreme reaction to the rigid and inflexible authoritarianism of the older educationist of the "Sit Still and Do as You are told", or "A child must be seen but not heard" school of thinking. The modern stress on greater freedom for the child to choose and fashion his own education is a healthy one, provided we are quite clear of what freedom really connotes in the total context of a child's education, and do not fall into the only



too prevalent error of confusing freedom with licence. Freedom is not something negative, in the sense of a release from all restraint and prohibition, nor is it something that can be imposed on the child from outside all of a piece. Freedom is positive, the opportunity to discover and develop the best that is in each one of us, and such freedom inevitably implies authority, discipline and self-control. Our great philosopher-educationist Dr. Zakir Hussain is firmly of this view "Freedom and authority are in my view no contrasting opposites. For there is no authority in education, without the inner freedom which recognises it, and there is no freedom without regulation and orderliness which is felt as authoritative."

Further, freedom is not a gift but a conquest; for adults to abdicate all authority, and give the growing child complete freedom before he is ready for it, or has developed the self-discipline necessary to make a creative use of it is as unpsychological and uneducational as denying him any liberty whatsoever. The idea should be to let the child earn his freedom in gradually increasing measure, and, at the same time, to help him to make the best use of such freedom as is earned by him to develop all that is best in him. Authority has an essential role to play in this process of helping a child to make a liberating and creative use of his freedom. The consummation devoutly to be wished for will be reached when the child has learnt to discipline his lower nature in order to free his higher nature, and has attained sufficient self-mastery over his own undisciplined impulses and passions to tread of his own free will the straight and narrow path towards true self-realisation, which is self-expression ruled and guided by a worthy ideal. But till that happy state is reached,—and how few even among adults reach it?—the growing child and adolescent must be led along the path of true self-discipline and self-realisation by the kind yet firm hand of wise, farsighted and understanding authority. To quote Dr. Zakir Hussain once again "The road to freedom is made by authority. To cut out authority altogether would be to cut out that road. The real question that concerns education is really not one of Either-Or, it is the trouble of determining how long external guidance and authority is essential to reach the agreed end of self-determination. How long might authority last, how soon

shall freedom take over, for take over it must for the development of a morally free personality in the end."

The reintroduction of a sane and balanced concept of authority is one of the most pressing needs of the day, for the spate of indiscipline in home and school, and the serious growth of juvenile delinquency in one day, are primarily due to the lack of vital elements in the young person's early education. If authority abdicates from the home and the school, before the child has been gradually led from externally imposed discipline to self-discipline, licence will inevitably take its place, because children, unused to handling the double-edged weapon of freedom and not knowing what to do with it, are bound to abuse it to inflict serious intellectual, moral and spiritual damage on themselves and on others. Young children, and even adolescents, for all their show of rebellion and non-conformity, expect their elders to exercise a certain measure of authority over them, to help them to discipline these unruly impulses and passions; if these elders, because of a misconception of the true nature and role of freedom in the child's education, thrust complete freedom on them to do as they please, instead of being grateful, children and adolescents are more likely to be resentful and to bite the hand that feeds them! There is only one thing worse than an excessive use of authority in the home and in the school, too much freedom given too early and too fast.

The late Prof. John Dewey, who is often mistakenly put forward as an advocate of the "free expression" school of educational philosopher, was only too well aware of the intimate relationship between freedom and authority and the grave danger to the home, school, and society at large of any abdication of the role of authority in education. "In effect", he wrote, "authority stands for stability of social organisation by means of which direction and support are given to individuals, while individual freedom stands for the force by which change is brought about. The issue that requires constant attention is the intimate and organic union of the two things, of authority and freedom, of stability and change. The idea of attaining a solution by separation, instead of union, misleads and thwarts endeavour whenever it is acted upon. The widespread adoption of this false and mis-

leading idea is a strong contributing factor to the present state of world confusion."

The use of authority must begin in the home, because, as modern psychologists have stressed, the first few years of a child's education are vital in his physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual growth. The early education of the child is the responsibility of his parents, and fortunately so, because they are best fitted to teach the child the true value of authority and the necessary distinction between true authority on the one hand and authoritarianism on the other. The child knows his parents' love for him has his best interests at heart; even when they use their parental authority to compel him to do things distasteful to him, he has a sneaking awareness that, even though he may not be able to appreciate the reason for their exercise of authority, such authority is being used for his own good, and not for its own sake. Hence the parents are much better fitted to teach the child to obey lawfully constituted authority in the right spirit than are teachers or policemen. This, of course, implies that the parents are alive to their responsibilities that they respect the individuality of the child, and exercise their authority for his benefit, and not for their own convenience! The child is a reasonably rational creature, who will obey authority he trusts, if he is given sensible reasons for doing so. Hence, instead of peremptorily issuing orders which demand a blind obedience, parents would do well to endeavour to convince their children of the reasonableness of the authority they are compelled to exercise over him for his own good. And as the child passes from infancy through childhood to adolescence, he must gradually be granted an increasing degree of freedom from parental authority to enable him to pass, as painlessly as possible, from externally imposed discipline to free self-imposed self-discipline.

Authority in the home must be reasonable, it must also be consistent for an inconsistent use of authority is worse than no authority since it sets up feelings of frustration and insecurity in the child. The role of authority in the home is fundamental; if a child learns to ignore, circumvent, defy or hate the authority of his parents, he will transfer this attitude to his teachers and all others placed in authority over him.

Nothing is more common, more stupid, and more dangerous than the attitude of those parents who allow, and sometimes even encourage their children, to openly flout their parental authority in the home during the first six or seven years of their life, and when they send them to school, expect their poor, unfortunate teachers to instil in them true respect for adult authority. Such irresponsible parents sow the wind, the teachers, and society at large, sooner or later, reap the whirlwind!

Parents must, therefore, during the pre-school years of a child, by a wise, firm and loving exercise of their parental authority, enable their young children to recognise the need for authority in their lives. And when the children go to school, parents must complement and bolster up the authority of the school and not as so many consciously or unconsciously are apt to do, undermine or even destroy the legitimate authority which a good school must exercise over its students. The respective roles of authority and freedom in the school are inevitably limited and bounded by the previous home education of the children. The timid, overdependent child who has been closeted or bullied, and the aggressive, anarchic child who has been allowed to run wild at home are common types of 'problem' children encountered by the average teacher. The teacher cannot shirk his responsibility towards them. Both need the right mixture of authority and freedom to help them to develop into normal healthy children, but in each case the approach and emphasis will have to be different to achieve the best results.

No hard and fast description of the role of authority and its correlative freedom in the school can be laid down, because children are diverse individuals, and each will have to be handled differently. But certain guiding principles can be useful. To begin with, authority is as essential in a school as freedom, perhaps more essential in the early years of a child's schooling. The success of a school and of a teacher will depend very largely on their ability to strike a judicious balance between freedom and authority, a balance that will be different with different children, in different situations, with different age groups. Authority, secondly, should not imply 'authoritarianism'; the rigid imposition of a body of rules and prohibi-



tions, the reason for which is never clearly explained to the children. Authority should be rational and consistent and should demand not a blind but a reasonable, and, for the most part, willing obedience. And it should be consciously and conscientiously utilised in an honest and impartial manner by Heads and teachers who are neither petty dictators nor mere ciphers, but mature and reasonable leaders of a co-operative community in which certain rules, framed for the good of all, have to be obeyed so as to promote both the good of the individuals and the good of the community. Commands should be as few as possible, and rules reduced to a minimum, but such rules as are necessary should be firmly enforced in a calm and judicial manner avoiding the hypocritical "This will hurt me more than it hurts you" approach. Children will have to submit to authority, and to obey social, political and moral laws in later life, any breach of which will be followed by the appropriate punishment, the sooner they learn to do so during their schooling, the better.

Indian society in the past was based on blind authority, on uncritical acceptance, on unquestioning conformity. Since then the wheel has turned full circle, and authority is now a relative stranger to our homes and schools and we are reaping the bitter fruits of our neglect of this vital element in the education of the growing child and youth in the growing indiscipline and delinquency among children and young people. The sooner the concept of authority is rescued from oblivion and obloquy and restored to its erstwhile position an essential element in the maintenance of discipline, and the sooner we become aware of the true and integral relationship between authority and freedom, the better it will be for our children, and the sounder and more enduring will be the education they receive, at home and in the school. It has been well said that "No amount of improvement and reconstruction will bear much fruit if the homes and the schools are undermined by indiscipline" and that "nothing is more calculated to develop a proper sense of self-discipline and proper behaviour than their enforcement, not by any outside authority with any symbol of punishment, but by the students themselves."

There can be no true discipline and no true responsibility

without freedom. "Freedom and responsibility to quote Sir Ronald Gould, "like love and marriage, beer and skittles, fish and chips, and Sodom and Gomorrha are inseparable. Man is only free if he has responsibility. Conversely, he can only be held responsible, if he is free. There is no freedom without responsibility, and no responsibility without freedom. And there can be no true freedom, without authority."

## XI

### THE CHALLENGE OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

THE heated debate that centres round the vexed question of the position of religion in education is of comparatively recent origin. Till the 19th century it was an axiom, both in India and in Europe, that religion was the core, the cementing and motive force of education, and the foundation on which the super-structure of education must be built. The wave of secularism that succeeded the French Revolution, however, divorced education from religion on the Continent; under British rule it spread to India, where, coupled with the British policy of strict neutrality in matters of religion, it led to the introduction of a predominantly secular type of public education throughout the country. Secular education has, since then, been the order of the day in all publicly maintained schools, both in Europe and in India, though, alongside the State system of education, there has continued to exist and to flourish a system of privately managed schools, run by the various religious denominations, in which religion forms an essential part of the education.

And so the debate continues. The secularists are of the opinion, either on ideological or practical grounds, or on both, that it is undesirable and or impracticable to include religious teaching as a part of education; their opponents hold that without such teaching, education is lopsided and incomplete, an empty shell without substance, a body without a soul. Till World War II, the secularists were triumphant everywhere, and religion was banned in all publicly maintained schools in the U.S.A., in Europe and in India. But the war has led to a searching of hearts everywhere, and the rising tide of juvenile indiscipline, immorality and delinquency in every country in the world is slowly but surely turning the tide of public opinion in favour of re-introducing religion into the school curriculum. "Today", to quote Prof. J. R. Ross, "it is the conviction of an increasing number of thoughtful people that education, if it is to produce and maintain a

high degree of civilisation and to safeguard it against periodical lapses into barbarism, must be based on religion". In England the famous 1944 Education Act made religious instruction and worship a compulsory part of the education provided by all State schools, and in several European countries, in which Governments fell in the past for only proposing to extend public aid to the "Church" schools, a more tolerant spirit is discernible. Religious instruction is permitted in many countries at State schools out of school hours, if the parents desire it, and, in some countries, notably Holland and Scotland, denominational schools are encouraged and State-aided.

Under her New Constitution, free India has been declared a secular democratic republic; the British policy of strict Government neutrality in matters of religion has been continued, and while the Constitution does not bar the teaching of religion, subject to the "Conscience Clause", in private schools run by various religious bodies, no religious teaching is permitted at any State school. This policy of religious neutrality however, does not mean, (as in some countries, and especially those under Communist rule), that the State is irreligious, non-religious or hostile to religion and religious instruction, if not to religion itself. This fact was made quite clear by the former Education Minister, Dr. Shrimali, in an address delivered to an annual A.I.F.E.A. Conference a few years ago. "It is a mistaken belief", said Dr. Shrimali, "that a Secular state is opposed to the inculcation of moral and spiritual values; it only rejects the concept of a State religion. In fact a secular democracy cannot survive unless it is based on certain definite ethical values and spiritual principles, and all its social institutions are geared to cultivate this in the intellectual and emotional disposition of the young. If we lose sensitiveness to moral and spiritual values and fail to practise them in our life, we shall be a nation without a soul." It is an acknowledged fact that the heart of the Indian nation is essentially religious yet a policy of secularism rightly understood, appeared to be to our Constitution makers the only policy a democracy could safely follow in the light of the diversity of religions in it. Hence no religious instruction of any kind is permissible at State schools. But at the same time the Government has granted and guaranteed, in the



Constitution to the various denominations complete freedom and generous assistance to maintain their own schools, in which they can freely propagate their own religion and include for those of their faith denominational religious instruction and worship, provided these are given out of school hours and not imposed on children of other religions.

The total exclusion of religious teaching from Government schools and colleges has not met with universal approval in India. Many regret the omission, and prominent national leaders and educationists have openly frowned on the present non-religious character of education in State educational institutions. C. R. Rajagopalachari, when he was Home Minister, in a speech to the Muslim Educational Association in Madras, made it quite clear that the Government policy of secularism and neutrality did not spring from indifference to the necessity of religion in education. "Unless", said C. R., "we develop the inner law of conscience, and an attitude of reverence, life cannot be orderly. Education cannot be complete, unless religion is included in it"; and our first Education Minister, Maulana Azad, on more than one occasion, expressed a similar opinion. The Sargent Commission on "Post-War Reconstruction of Education in India (1944)" insisted that "religion in the widest sense should inspire all education; and that a curriculum devoid of an ethical basis will prove barren in the end"; it recognised "the fundamental importance of spiritual and moral instruction for character building", but, because of obvious administrative and other difficulties, considered such instruction should be given not in the schools—at least those maintained by the State—but at home and in community. The University Education Commission (1949) was much more forthright in its recommendations on this vital matter; it emphasised that religion was a fundamental part of education, and recommended that ways and means should be found to introduce some form of undenominational religious teaching and worship into all Indian schools, colleges and universities. "Ours is a generation", stated the Commission, "that knows how to doubt, but not to admire, much less to believe" and it was strongly of the opinion that religious and moral teaching and practice were necessary to stop the current drift of Indian

educated youth towards indiscipline and to falling victims to hedonism and materialism, cynicism and atheism.

The teaching fraternity in India also appears to favour such a proposal for in 1957, the All India Federation of Educationist Associations resolved that immediate steps should be taken to impart moral and religious education in schools, colleges and universities.

The Sri Prakasa Report on "Moral and Religious Instruction in Schools (1960)" paid special attention to this problem. Commenting on the growing spirit of restlessness and moral anarchy among the youth of today, in the world in general and India in particular, and seeking to put its finger on the root of the disease, the Committee stated: "The many ills that our world of education and our society as a whole is suffering today are mainly due to the gradual disappearance of the hold of the basic principles of religion on the heart of the people. The old bonds that kept men together are fast loosening and the various new ideologies that are coming to us are increasingly worsening the situation. The only cure it seems to us is the deliberate inculcation of moral and spiritual values from the earliest years of our lives, if we lose them we shall be a nation without a soul." To avert this catastrophe, the Committee made a forthright and unequivocal recommendation that immediate provision should be made for imparting moral and spiritual instruction to all pupils in all types of educational institutions.

The Kothari Commission, in its turn, devoted time and thought to the vexed problem of religious and moral instruction in a Secular State. Realising that India is a Secular State and aware that this is a handicap, the Commission is of the view that "the letter and spirit of the Constitution must be respected and the sensibilities of religious groups cannot be ignored". But it is quick to stress that this does not mean it is advocating an irreligious or anti-religious policy. "The adoption of a secularist policy", according to the Commission, "means that in political, economical and social matters, all citizens, irrespective of their religious faith, enjoy equality of rights. But it does not mean an irreligious or anti-religious policy, it does not belittle the importance of religion as such. It gives every citizen the fullest freedom of

belief and worship. It is anxious to ensure good relations among the different religious groups and to provide not only tolerance but an active reverence for all religions." This ideal of promoting in students an equal reverence for all religions in general and for their own in particular, the Commission realised, was not being achieved in our schools. "A serious defect in the curriculum", states the Commission, "is the absence of provision for education in social, moral and spiritual values. In the life of the majority of Indians religion is a great motivating force and is intimately bound up with the formation of character. A national system of education cannot afford to ignore this purposeful force." In view of the above circumstances, the Commission recommends that "conscious and organised attempts be made for imparting education in social, moral and spiritual values, with the help wherever possible of the ethical teachings of the great religions."

In making this recommendation, the members of the National Education Commission were expressing an opinion that is in keeping with the consensus of world opinion as expressed by contributors from various countries to the *Columbia University Year Book on Post-War Reconstruction in Education, 1948*. Summing up the universal trend of opinion Prof. Kandel, one of the Editors of the Yearbook states, "The need that was recognised as most urgent was a re-emphasis on moral and spiritual values, either through direct religious instruction or in any other way that would be permissible in those school systems where religious instruction is excluded from the curriculum."

Practical difficulties will undoubtedly arise in any attempt to give a local habitation and a name to the National Education Commission's recommendations on religious and moral education. But these difficulties should not blind us to the essential validity and sanity of its recommendations, and of the urgent necessity for exploring ways and means of implementing them in our schools and colleges. Post-war youth in India, as in other countries, is steadily deteriorating in character and morals, and the roots of this deterioration can be traced, inter alia, to the predominantly and increasingly secular religious and moral character of the education they

receive at school and in college for a man's character depends on his beliefs. The home cannot by itself fill this vacuum in their lives; schools and colleges must also do their share, for they exert as great, if not a greater influence on modern youth as their homes.

Religion is an integral component in a complete education; without it the curriculum will be one-sided and unbalanced, for it is religion which gives the necessary unity to life and therefore provides the basic correlation of subjects in the curriculum. The past half-century has seen many new subjects added piecemeal to the curriculum of the schools which today resembles a patchwork quilt without design or purpose. Only religious and moral instruction can give meaning and pattern to the shreds and patches that comprise the modern curriculum and bring some order into the existing chaos.

Further, religious education is essential for the development of moral values, religion and morals have a close and intimate connection as conduct flows from creed. The attempt to teach ethics apart from religion has proved an inevitable and costly failure; religious belief is fundamental to morality which rapidly deteriorates deprived of its sanction and support. The disintegration of the individual personality and of social institutions, which is so common a feature of modern life, is doubtless the result of the undermining of moral principles and religious belief largely brought about by the secular and a religious character of modern education. Hence the renovation of modern youth, and the regeneration of society in its turn can only be accomplished by a radically reformed system of education in which religious and moral education forms the most vital element, for, to quote an eminent educationist, "It is religion that provides the frame-work of a hierarchy of values and sees to it that the physical is subordinated to the intellectual, the intellectual to the moral and spiritual, and the spiritual to God. And it is religion also that can provide the proper synthesis of all the arts and sciences taught in the school." Education without religion is like a house without foundation, and the winds came, and the waves and the house fell and great is generally the fall thereof. Its omission from the average school and college curriculum is the omission of something absolutely essential, for religion is not a "frill"



or a luxury but an integral part of a complete education.

Different parts of the curriculum lay emphasis on different aspects or factors of the personality—the body, the intelligence, the emotions—religious and moral education alone aim at the formation of the total personality, and, as such, must occupy a central position in any scheme that aims at the total education of the whole man, and not merely at the development of certain aspects of his personality, leaving others untouched and undeveloped. Of these two, religious education is more fundamental because religion lies at the basis of morality; providing him as it does with standards and essential motives for moral behaviour, and by so doing shaping his character and determining what he will become. We must never forget that the ultimate aim of education is, to quote Ruskin, “not to teach the child to know what he does not know, but to behave as he does not behave”. Hence any education worthy of the name must enable the child not only to make a good living, but to live a good life, religion alone can provide worthy goals and motives for the progress towards this goal; indeed the building up of character, the formation of not only the body and mind but of the heart and will of the child, the fashioning of an integrated personality is impossible without religion.

Besides, the bitter experience of the last fifty years has already demonstrated that education without religion does not remain non-religious, but rapidly becomes anti-religious, because the absence of religion from the curriculum leads the pupils to conclude that religion is unimportant, insignificant, too controversial for practical purposes, irrational, and having little to do with “the serious business of living”. The attempt of the secularists to treat religion as a private affair to be confined to the home has led to the dangerous attempt of modern man to live his private and public life in watertight compartments, and to regulate each by a different code of standards and morals which accounts for the low moral standards that govern public life in many countries, including ours today. Knowledge by itself is not only sterile but dangerous. Mahatma Gandhi put his finger on the root defect of modern secular education, when he said that education without a religious and moral basis would only succeed in producing

"clever devils", for the great danger of secularism in education is that because religion is ignored, children come out of school with a materialistic, selfish, lopsided and purely worldly attitude to life.

Modern India has, like the rest of the world, been infected with the modern faith in scientific humanism and materialism, the faith that man with the aid of science and technology can solve all his problems. In such a faith, religion, if not positively rejected, is relegated to the background and has no part to play in the planning of the Welfare State which is the dream of our planners and till now religious and moral instruction has not figured in the curriculum of the average school or college in India, except for a handful of schools run by the Ramkrishna Mission and the Christian Missionary Orders. "The most important element in the curriculum", to quote a famous educationist, "is forbidden. God is excluded. Science must be taught but the Author of all sciences must remain unknown; History must be taught, but the Divine Providence which governs and rules the destiny of men and nature is to be ignored. Geography must be taught but He who has made all things, who has created the beauty of creation, earth, sky and sea, is to be for the youth of the country an UNKNOWN GOD". This is the root of the current crisis of character both among the youth and among adults in India despite her professed "spirituality", is that there are too many clever men and women about and too few good ones—this is the end result of the religious, moral, secular education that has been in vogue ever since the Age of Reason and Enlightenment!

It is time this negative, incomplete, unbalanced and dangerous type of education was replaced by one with deeper roots and nobler incentives, by an education which is not only concerned with means and partial objectives, but with the ultimate ends of man's existence, for the attainment of which his education should prepare him. Religious education should boom the core of any such pattern of education.

The author is convinced that once educationists, and the community at large, are convinced that religious education is an indispensable part of true education, ways and means will be found to overcome the administrative difficulties

involved in introducing it into all Indian schools and colleges.

The expression "religious education" is used deliberately in place of the more usual expression "religious instruction". The latter reduces religious education to the status of just another subject on the Time Table, to be taught in isolation from the other subjects. This is not enough, and might possibly do more harm than good. Religious education should not be a circumscribed part of the curriculum, isolated from and insulated against all dangerous contact with the other parts; it must provide the foundation and informing spirit of the curriculum as a whole. Religious education to be worthwhile should consist not only of religious instruction in the tenets of a particular faith, but in common worship, in the imparting of a religious outlook towards life and a way of life in which belief and conduct fuse in a human whole. Religion to be truly an integral part of the education given by any school must permeate all activities and every feature of the life and of the school. To quote Prof. E. Mensel, "The tone and character of the institution must be a constant inducement to the pupils to behave and to view life as one who respects God and his fellow men. This is not the optional extra subject but the very heart of the life and attitudes of the pupils, staff members and of the institution itself". And it must be inculcated both by words and example by teachers who are, as far as it is humanly possible to be, living exemplars of the way of life they advocate. "Children", to quote Prof. E. B. Castle, "will learn religion from the example of the teacher's life. They will learn the meaning of honesty, helpfulness, kindness and charity when they work and play in a school where these simple virtues decide the relationship between people in school. Religion then is much more than a subject; it is a way of life. After being shown round a famous school in England by a Headmaster, a visitor asked, "Do you teach religion?" The Headmaster replied, "We teach nothing else".

There was a time when this was true of most schools in our country. India must return in this respect to the past heritage and once again strive manfully to make religion the base and the inspiration and the motive force of her system of education. In this return lies our educational salvation, for

to quote from a famous Editorial in *The Times* of London, "Religion must form the very basis of any education worth the name, and education with religion omitted is not really education at all."



## XII

### HOME, SCHOOL, SOCIETY AND THE STATE IN EDUCATION

EDUCATION is the art of helping a child to grow to full maturity of body, mind and spirit in, and, to a large extent, for society; and as such is a continuous process of development from the cradle to the grave. During this extended period of education the responsibility of educating a human being is shared by many persons and groups, the growing child is subject to a variety of educational influences that mould his character and develop his personality, of these the most important are, in the order of their appearance and importance—the Home, the School, Society and the State.

The life of the average child revolves round the twin points of home and school which are the major determining factors in the child's education, for, as the twig is bent, so will the tree grow. On parents, and teachers who are *in loco parentis* in the schools, accordingly, rests the major responsibility for the development of the child's character and personality; it is their duty to be aware of their grave responsibility, and to study and prepare themselves to discharge that responsibility in as enlightened and effective a manner as possible.

That there are good teachers goes without saying, and they give to the children under their care all that could be desired. But there are others who because of ignorance, invincible or otherwise, do irreparable damage to the child at an age when he is most impressionable and least able to defend himself. The need to attract the best possible people to the teaching profession, and to equip them adequately for their difficult, complex and exacting vocation is one of the most vital needs of our time; the proper education of parents for their tremendous vocation is a still more imperative need. We have devoted a special chapter to this vital topic because it has been so often neglected.

Child psychologists speak with one voice to this effect—that the first five or six years are the most important in a child's

life, for during them the foundations of his future development are laid. "The age till 5", says a well-known English doctor-psychologist, "is the susceptible age, physically and psychologically; never again will the child advance so rapidly as in the formative period of youth;" and the famous psychoanalyst Dr. Rudolf Allers, states bluntly that on those who are responsible for the child's upbringing in the first six years of his life depends almost the entire responsibility for his later physical, intellectual, emotional and moral development.

This considered and expert opinion is supported by a wealth of evidence from many different sources. Such evidence not only reveals that the child's basic personality patterns are laid down before the child arrives at school but also that there is a positive correlation between a child's score on intelligence tests and performance at school and the intellectual, cultural and socio—and economic quality of his home and his relationship with his parents. Parents generally have the sole care of the child till he goes to school at the age of 4 to 6, hence on them primarily rests the grave responsibility of ensuring that their children are normal and potentially educable to the maximum of their capacity when they go to school, and not "damaged goods".

A home implies a family, and it is in the heart of the family that a child learns his first and most lasting lessons. The family is the natural environment of the child in his early formative years, when the foundations of his physical, mental and spiritual health are being laid, and it remains the focus of his life and sympathies throughout his allotted span of three score and ten years. Hence the family is the first, the most natural and most important educative agency; differences in home environment are mainly responsible, as we have pointed out earlier, for the well-known phenomenon that children who are given a similar schooling benefit in varying measure from it. The Swiss educationist Pestalozzi was the first to stress the vital influence of the family on the child's development; he regarded the family as the one indispensable element in the child's training, "the mother and fount of all true education". The most up-to-date psychological research confirms Pestalozzi's brilliant intuition of the many-sided and all pervasive contributions of the family and the home

to the education of the child. The family is the natural biological, sociological, economic, and psychological unit, and so vital and essential is the "education for life" it provides, that an eminent American sociologist and psychologist, Prof. Colley, after surveying all the available evidence on the family as an educative factor, concludes "The family is the cradle of human development and the nursery of human nature", which is no flight of fancy but a blunt statement of fact. It is true that many agencies share with the family the responsibility of educating the child—the School, Society, the Church, Temple or Mosque, and the State—to name the most important—but there is one agency which carries the principal responsibility of which it can never divest itself, the home and the family. The home and especially cultural background is the dominant factor for good or evil in every child's development. The other agencies are only junior partners acting as co-operators, assistants and advisers whose duty it is to help parents to fulfil their primary and inescapable responsibility, not to attempt to whittle down this responsibility or to take it away from them, except in very exceptional circumstances.

In view of the overriding importance of the family in the education of the child, the modern tendency of School authorities and of the State to push it into the background is to be deplored. It is true that far too many parents lack the expert knowledge and skill needed to make the most of their opportunities, and that only too frequently they ruin the child before he enters school. This is no reason, however, for isolating the child from his family and his parents, for this drastic remedy is in most cases worse than the disease it sets out to cure. The remedy for faulty parental education of the child lies in the education of the parents so that they may fulfil their task to the best of their ability, and not in ignoring or trying to circumvent them. We will deal with this important matter in the next chapter in some detail.

The school, after the home, is the main extra-family influence on the child from 5 or 6 to 16 or 17 and plays the next most important role in his total development. The school is not only a larger society than the home but a cross-section of the wider society outside. A good school aims at an all-round

development of the child in body, mind and spirit; but it is perhaps in the education of the mind, and in the physical and social training it gives to the child that it achieves most. Schools also can, and do much to mould the character and personality of the growing child, and to improve, or ruin, the product they receive; but their effectiveness is greatly limited by the nature of the child they receive at the age of 5 or 6, his home background, and the quality of his parents. They should be quite clear from the start as to what they can and what they cannot accomplish, and not attempt the impossible, or make the fantastic claim that they, and they alone, make the child what he turns out to be in later life. The school is one of the agencies that guide and promote the development of the child, and it can only do its job if it takes into account and works in partnership with other persons and social agencies that help to educate children. To quote Prof. Marjorie Tait "Education is not only what goes on in school, the responsibility of educating a human being is shared by many persons and groups. Total education is a lengthy and complex process in which the teacher and school do not start the first, or stay the longest."

It is true the school is in many ways a more advanced society than the home and that the child needs to make the transition from the relatively simple and sheltered society of the home to the wider and more complex society of the school a vital part of his growing-up process. Nevertheless, the school should know and keep its place, and not attempt to grow at the expense of the home, or to detach children from the family and to absorb them into the school organisation where "they learn to bypass family loyalties and accept the superior authority of the school and teachers over parents." This would be an inversion of priorities, and would lead to serious repercussions; the school is important, but the home is very much more important.

More important, however, than either the home or the school singly and by itself is the manner and extent to which they co-operate, or fail to co-operate, in promoting their common aim—the total education of the child. The core of the problem of education lies in the delicate and complex relationship between the home and the school, and the in-



dispensable basis of a successful education lies in a real partnership between parents and teachers who must learn to work closely together if education is to go forward with real purpose and understanding. "If", says Prof. M. Tait, "What is done in school is to mean the most it can, we are bound to link up school life with home life in every possible way. Otherwise there will be unreality in school life, and many avoidable strains and maladjustments between school and home".

Unfortunately the existing relationship, especially in India, between home and school, parents and teachers generally leaves much to be desired. While in countries like the U.S.A., USSR and U.K. home and school are drawing closer together and co-operating and interacting to the benefit of children, in India home and school remain cut off and isolated from each other and seldom work together for the benefit of the child. Indeed school and home, parents and teacher, only too often seem to regard themselves as natural enemies or to be apathetic or allergic to each other. The teacher, regarding herself as the educational expert and all parents as amateur bunglers, pulls one way; the parents through ignorance or spite, pull the other, and the helpless victim of this senseless and fatal tug-of-war grows up with divided loyalties and a split mind, unhappy and maladjusted.

This conflict between home and school, parents and teachers must cease, or all effective education will be ruled out. The home and school are the twin halves of the educational milieu of the growing child's life; they must blend harmoniously if the child is to be truly educated. Schools should open their doors in welcome to the parents, and the children's homes to the teachers. Parents and teachers must co-operate on a frank and friendly basis informally or through Parent-Teacher Associations, to help one another to understand and aid the child, for each can contribute unique and vital elements to the education of the other. Wholehearted and friendly co-operation should be the keynote of the relationship between home and school, else each will lack something essential and the child will be the sufferer. Home and school, whether they like it or not, are inescapably partners in the education of the child; unless they realize, and act upon this conviction no true education will be possible. To sum

up in the words of an eminent educationist, "The conclusion is therefore inescapable that mere schooling is not education. The home is the real educator. School should open home fronts in them and parents must be induced if not compelled to shoulder their responsibilities as educators." The average parent in India has to be made to realise, not only his own inescapable responsibilities in the education of his children, but also the value of parent-teacher consultation and co-operation in the education of his child. Only when this vital link between home and school is established, nourished and enriched will education achieve all it aims to achieve.

The school not only has intimate links with the home, it does and should also have close links with the social environment and the society outside its walls. "Schools are, in a very real sense, social institutions, they are not only influenced to a varying degree by current socio-economic trends and influence but, in turn, have a social impact and definite social responsibilities." "There are" says Prof. Lester Smith "two principal ways in which schools can influence society. They can help to transmit what is good in our culture, and perpetuate values that our forefathers rightly cherished. They can also be a creative and constructive force improving the pattern and raising the quality of our society."

The schools, he adds, share this responsibility for social conservatism and creation with other institutions such as the Home, the Press, the Radio, the Church, but their influence is perhaps greater than each of these, except perhaps the family, as they influence children during their most impressionable years. But we must realise that the social influence of even good schools is limited, because, unfortunately they have no control over the more alluring and more dangerous influences such as films, the Press, Radio and T.V. etc. which can be the teacher's best friends or his most insidious and dangerous enemies.

One of the main causes of the relative failure of the education given to most children at school is the conflict between the ideals and values of society, as shaped by extra-school influences as the home, the film and T.V., the Press etc. and the school. The existing gap between the two, can be greatly reduced if the school and society co-operate wholeheartedly to ensure

that social and moral values of the home and of society at large are in harmony with those the child learns at school. The ultimate aim should be to create a carefully ordered and integrated "Educative Society" of home, school and society in which the accustomed pattern of life and values are broadly the same, so that the continuous and harmonious development of the child is not only made possible, but considerably facilitated. How this can be accomplished is elaborated in the chapter on School and Society.

Home, School and Society, especially that part of it broadly called the Church, Mosque or Temple, which have much to contribute to the spiritual and moral education of the child, have from time immemorial shouldered the main responsibility for the child's education. The State is a comparative newcomer on the educational scene, but, like the camel in the fable, it is fast pushing the established occupants out of residence; the modern State wishes to control the lives and thought of its citizens, and the best and easiest way of doing this is by controlling the education of the youth. Perhaps the most striking feature of the educational history of this century has been the rapidly increasing part played by the State in most countries in the education of its citizens.

The history and pattern of State action in this field is a familiar one. Education has been begun in most countries, including India, under the aegis of the Churches, Mosques or Temples or of philanthropic individuals or voluntary bodies; as the demand for education outstripped the supply, the State stepped in, at first to fill up the gaps in the voluntary system, gradually to supplant it, to a greater or less extent. This quantitative increase in State provision for, and control of, education has, unfortunately, not always been accompanied by a qualitative growth in the character and content of the education imparted; rather it has, in too many instances, tended to depersonalize and mechanize education, to create a drab uniformity, and identify education more and more with mass instruction in literacy rather than promote true education.

This tendency of the modern Leviathan State to monopolize education, to elbow out the private voluntary system, and even to encroach on the inalienable rights of parents is, in

our opinion, a retrogressive step. Not only is it an injustice to those individuals and voluntary societies which pioneered education and bore the burden of the day and the heat, but a monopolistic State system of education, which tends to set up a colourless uniformity and regimentation in place of old riches and complexity of the educational system, will greatly impoverish education. The State, in the matter of education especially, should be guided not by preconceived dogmatic laissez-faire or socialist theories, but by a careful consideration whether and to what extent the welfare of children and of society is increased or decreased through a virtual State monopoly of education.

Every parent has a right to demand of the State an education for the child suited to his age, ability and aptitudes, and it is a primary duty of the State to see that such an education is available to all its children, irrespective of class, caste or ability to pay. The State has the duty of ensuring that adequate provision for the education of all children is available; this is not the same thing as attempting to provide all such education itself. Education is, or should be, a community affair and the experience of progressive countries has shown that the best system of education is born of a co-operative effort between the State and the people. Where a flourishing voluntary system of education is in existence, the State should afford it every help and encouragement, moral and financial; it is the function of the State to supplement not supplant voluntary effort, to fill the gaps, and ensure that education is brought within the reach of every child; to see that the necessary standards are maintained, to work for the continuous improvement and extension of educational facilities, and to provide the money for education. To give till it hurts must be the keynote of the financial policy of the State with regard to education in place of its present policy of spending on education as little as it possibly can. Money spent by the State on education is not uncreative or wasteful, but the finest form of investment, the benefits of which will be reaped both by its children, who are its most precious wealth, and by the community. Indeed, only when educational expenditure occupies the same prominence in the Budget as expenditure on Defence will true educational progress be possible.



The State has a duty to provide for the education of all children, and the right to insist that they are educated; it cannot permit any parent to say that he will give no education to his child. But the State has no right to determine where, and by whom, children should be educated, to decide whether a child will go to a particular school or another, or be educated in a particular manner, if the parents wish him to be educated in another. The Supreme Court in a recent Test Case ruled that the right to educate their children was an inalienable right and responsibility of the parents of which no State can deprive them. Indeed, the right to decide what education the child will have is such an important right that one finds in the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights, to which India is a party, the following provision in Article 26(3) "Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that should be given to their children."

The child, it must never be forgotten, is not the mere creature of the State, those who nurture him and direct his destiny have the right, coupled with the high duty, to select the type of educational institution that will best prepare him for life. The State can, and must, ensure an adequate provision of schools of all types and for all ages; it cannot, and should not, interfere, except in exceptional circumstances, with the parents' right to choose to which schools they will send their children or the types of teachers to whom they are willing to entrust them. If, therefore, the parents desire to educate their children in private schools, or schools run by religious or philanthropic organisations, provided these schools and their teachers satisfy the requirements laid down by Government, a democratic State has no constitutional or moral right to suppress or to take over these schools and place them under its control. In brief, the State has the duty to see that parents do not neglect, because of indifference or ignorance, the education of their children; it cannot, except for grave reasons, arrogate the rights of parents to itself by "directing" children into whatever type of school it wishes.

Many States are, all over the world, unfortunately, showing an unhealthy desire to do just this, to standardise education and to mould children to its own image. Parents and teachers,

and champions of democratic values must organise themselves strongly to resist all such encroachments by the State on their inalienable rights. Only thus will they prevent a totalitarian type of State from emerging which will 'nationalize' their children and treat them as cogs in its vast, soulless machinery.

The question of State control over education, it must be clearly realised, is however important not only in a totalitarian country, but even in a democracy, because of the extension of State authority in so many different directions. In this connection, the salutary warning of Prof. Kandel is worth quoting and remembering. "It is incumbent upon all who are concerned with the preservation and protection of freedom of the mind in particular to safeguard it against the encroachment of what has been called the "new disposition", that is control of bureaucracies. There must be a clear and definite line of demarcation between those aspects of an educational system that the State, through a bureaucracy, may control in the interests of efficiency and uniformity of action, and those whose organisation, mechanisation and dictatorial prescription would in the end destroy. In a democracy there is a clear and definite answer to the question. "To whom does the school belong?" The answer should be that the State is only a partner in an enterprise in which all cultural groups within it are concerned and involved, and in the determination of which they should therefore have a voice." What citizens in a true democracy should and do most value is liberty of thought and action, within limits set for the common good. Where such liberty exists, as it does in our country, where it has been enshrined in our Constitution, there must be liberty to experiment with education and the right of voluntary associations and private enterprise to set up and manage, subject to suitable and acceptable State controls, educational institutions of their choice, and of parents to decide what kind of education their children should receive, and in what school Government or private, should be safeguarded.

In this connection, it is interesting and heartening to note the views of the Kothari Commission. While stressing that the growing educational needs of a modern society can only be met by the State, and that as the State has now rightly assumed full responsibility to provide all the needed educational facil-

ities, private enterprise can only have a limited and minor role, the Commission upholds the fundamental right of private schools to exist under the Constitution, and the need for private enterprise to play its part, however, limited, in the future development of education in our country. "It is true", states the Commission, "that some forms of private enterprise have made a negative rather than a positive contribution to education. At the same time, we should recognise that private enterprise has played an important role in the development of education in modern India, that a large proportion of our good institutions are in the private sector, and that they can continue to make useful contributions in the years ahead. The State should therefore make all possible use of the assistance that can come from the private sector for the development of education."

"Home, School, Society and the State, in these four orbits the life of the child and the adult revolves and each of them has a unique and indispensable contribution to make to his total education. Only if each of these four great educative agencies confines its activities to the things it can do best, and co-operates wholeheartedly with the others, instead of working at cross purposes or pulling in opposite directions, will the child be able to grow to full and harmonious maturity in a happy and ordered physical, intellectual, social, moral and spiritual environment, and to become a good man and a good citizen.

### XIII

#### EDUCATION FOR PARENTHOOD

MANY learned definitions of Society have been given by eminent sociologists; for our purpose one which merits consideration is that it is an aggregate of families. The family is the unit or cell in the social organism, and of the unity in diversity of families of all sizes, types and shades of opinion is made up the wealth, variety and complexity of any society. It is true that the organisation of modern societies is much more complex than it was in the distant past, just as the organisation of the modern family has also progressed in many ways from its primitive origins. Still the family remains the fundamental factor in any society, and to disparage or lose sight of this fact is to endanger the health, progress and well-being of society.

A family implies a home, and a home implies parents and children bound together with ties of mutual love, reverence and obedience. In the past the parents, especially the father, tended to be the most important factor in the home which was organised largely to suit adult convenience. Children had to be seen and not heard; they were well looked after, like pet dogs, it was seldom realised that they were not "adults in miniature" but young persons with their own unique rights and needs for which adequate provision had to be made in well-ordered homes.

The 20th century, which had been called "The Century of the Child", has not only redressed the balance but, like all reactions, tended to go to extremes in the opposite direction. In the Victorian age it was thought necessary to form Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. In our enlightened age, there is a definite need for some bold spirits to form a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Parents—to protect them from the tyranny and indiscipline of their emancipated children! The wheel has, indeed, turned full circle.

Perhaps this century has gone too far in its enthusiastic application of Rousseau's dictum "The first of all good things



is not authority, but liberty" to the education and upbringing of children. This is being gradually realised by the more sober minded educationists and psychologists all over the world. But the 20th century's emphasis on the child as the focus around which the home and the school revolve is, rid of its obvious exaggerations, a salutary one. Parents and teachers are the instruments through which the inherited wisdom and experience of the past is handed down to the rising generation. They have an important, and, in the early years especially a vitally important role to play. But children are the inheritors of the future, and the builders of tomorrow. Hence they must be the chief concern of society, and suitably educated, at home and in school, for their high calling.

In the child's total education, that given at home by the parents is of supreme importance. The most vital part of a child's education, as we have stressed in the previous chapter, is completed in the home during the first 5 or 6 years of his life. These early years, it bears repetition, are the most decisive not only for the child's physical, and intellectual development, which can be much stimulated and guided during this period, but chiefly for his moral and spiritual development and the moulding of his character. Psychologists, teachers, psychoanalysts, social workers, and all those having dealings with children, are insistent on this fact; and the most recent findings of normal and abnormal psychology confirm it, almost without the shadow of a doubt. It is during these early years in the home that the basic lines of a child's physical, emotional, mental and spiritual organisations are laid down. "Never again", says Gesell, "will the child's character, mind and spirit advance as in this formative period of growth," a verdict that is confirmed by eminent child psychologists all the world over.

The home, then, is the most important training ground of character and personality. Consequently upon those persons responsible for the nurture and upbringing of the child in these formative years, his parents, depends the main, and indeed, according to many eminent psychologists, almost the entire responsibility for the child's intellectual, moral and spiritual development. School, later life, companions, teachers, the surrounding milieu can improve or spoil the

growing child, but the basic product has been very largely fashioned by the parents. The experience of Reformatories, Hostels, Schools, and educational institutions of all kinds, bears out the fact that, however beneficently they are run, they can never replace in any scheme of education the individual care and close personal relationships that exist, or ought to exist, between parents and children. The nature and scope of this relationship determines the child's subsequent physical, emotional and personality development, hence it should be of the best and most enlightened type if the child is to grow into a normal and healthy adult.

Does such a relationship exist in the majority of homes? The growing indiscipline and delinquency among children, and their revolt against all authority, be it of parents or teachers or even the law, is striking evidence to the contrary. The blame in such cases is generally placed on the child, and the older generation are forever complaining of the iniquity and perversity of the youth of today. A little reflection and a sober examination of conscience should make them realize the fault is chiefly theirs, for children are largely what their parents and teachers make them. Most child delinquency is in fact parental delinquency, and an undisciplined child is in 99 cases out of a hundred the product of an undisciplined or inadequately disciplined home.

Defective parental education of children is generally due not to neglect or to indifference, but to ignorance, culpable or otherwise. Most parents know a fair amount about the physical care of their children (though even here their knowledge is very often defective and out-of-date) and few are familiar with the latest findings on such questions as dietetics, clothing, rest, recreation and exercise. About the still more important question of a child's mental health, of his psychological development, and of the right amount of training of his character and development of his personality, the majority of parents have the vaguest notions, derived mainly from confused memories of their own childhood and the way their parents brought them up. Their naivete at times is amazing. They indulge their children to the fullest extent until the age of 5 or 6, and then try in vain, or with dangerous repercussions in the child's later life, to curb their indiscipline

rebellious spirits. They are alternately too soft or too hard, blind to the fact that inconsistent discipline is worse than no discipline, and that the child needs protection not only against others but against his own unregulated instincts and impulses. Many are bewildered when their children exhibit the instability of behaviour which is a normal feature of adolescence, and think the devil has entered into their children. (Why is it most parents are so eager to forget their own adolescence?) Others put off the child's character training till this time of stress and strain, which is probably the worst period for it, for in these difficult years the child needs the greatest measure of love, sympathy, understanding and guidance to grow from childhood to maturity.

The instances could be multiplied indefinitely. Undoubtedly parents are much to blame, but in most cases theirs is the sin of culpable ignorance, not deliberate neglect. Child nurture is a highly skilled job requiring a great deal of expert knowledge and skill. Parents have to be Jacks-of-trades and masters of all. They have to combine in themselves the skill, and expert knowledge, of doctors, teachers, child psychologists, and social workers to be truly successful in their delicate and exacting task. Such knowledge and skill does not come, as is popularly believed, from instinct. To believe this would be to believe that a man or woman can be a doctor, or a teacher, or a psychologist by instinct. This is patently absurd. The vast majority of people, it is true, are born to be parents, but good parents are born as well as made, and for parenthood, as for any other profession or vocation, men and women need to be both trained and educated. Parenthood is the most exacting and most difficult job in the world; to leave the education of parents to chance is to endanger the physical and mental health of children, and the social and moral well-being and progress of society.

The content of a balanced and comprehensive course of education for parenthood could best be worked out in co-operation by a group of Doctors, Child Psychologists, Psychiatrists, Social Workers, teachers and enlightened parents. Its broad lines can easily be envisaged. It would include Health, Education, Child Psychology, Domestic Science, General Culture, Ethics, Religious Education, and any other

knowledge which parents need for the proper upbringing of their children.

The "Curriculum" of parent education is less important, than the methods adopted to put it across. On the success of these methods, much more than on the actual content of the course, will the success or failure of any scheme of education for parenthood depend. There must be no question of the imposition of such knowledge on parents by "Experts"

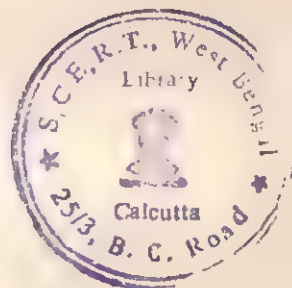
that would arouse hostility in the hearts of parents, and defeat its own purpose. Such education must be a co-operative seeking after truth, and a pooling of knowledge and experience by all those concerned with the welfare of children, especially the parents themselves, teachers, doctors, and child psychologists. There must be a free flow of ideas from all these sources into the common pool, from which each can draw according to his ability and need. The main emphasis must be on the education of the mothers, for to "educate a woman is to educate a family;" the fathers, however, must not be neglected.

Such an education must begin in the home. The children of enlightened parents will have had the best education for parenthood possible. It must be continued in the school with well-planned courses of child psychology, child nursing, domestic science and hygiene for girls, and biology, hygiene and hand-work for the boys. It must concentrate on young men and women preparing for marriage, through Marriage Advisory Councils, composed of doctors, psychologists and psychiatrists, teachers and parents, such as are doing excellent work in England and the U.S.A., and through pre-marriage courses of education, specially planned for this purpose. And, finally, it must continue when the young couple are married, through Women's Clubs, Child Guidance Clinics, Nursery Schools, Parent-Teacher Associations, Parent Discussion Groups, and other similar organizations, through carefully devised "Parents' Hour" programmed on the Radio, and "Parents" pages in the newspapers, and wherever possible, by progressive Community Education Centres on the model of the Peckham Family Education Centre in the U.K. a detailed account of which is given in the next chapter.

Education for parenthood is one of the needs of our day,



and one that will yield the most beneficial results in the future. No effort or expense should be spared to make it as efficient, comprehensive and effective as possible. Too long have parents been the neglected factor in blue-prints of educational reform. They should be brought into the centre of the picture, for to educate them properly is the richest investment in the future. Parental education is the finest and most fruitful form of social education, for to educate parents is to ensure the education of the coming generation, and the future progress and well-being of society.



## XIV

### THE PROBLEM OF SEX EDUCATION

THERE was a time not so very long ago when the word sex was strictly taboo, and it was even considered indecorous to call by name certain parts of the body which were always referred to as 'limbs' in polite society. The tide has turned with a vengeance. Not only are those same parts of the body flouted in the streets, on the screen, and from every advertisement hoarding, but Sex itself is freely and openly discussed, not only among adults but among teenagers, even in mixed company. Sex is, perhaps, the major obsession of our age and as researches in the U.K. and U.S.A. have shown, especially among adolescents. The theories of the Freudian school, misinterpreted, popularized, and vulgarized, have rationalized this obsession by making it seem quite normal and natural. The results, good and evil, of this modern obsession with sex are many and complex, and do not concern us here. We intend to confine our study to its effects on the growing child, and especially the adolescent.

The child of today, especially the young adolescent in India cannot escape the contamination of the times. The films he sees, the so-called 'Comics' and paperbacks he reads, the radio he listens to, the advertisements that catch his eye as he goes to school, force the facts of sex on his attention. And so persistently is this done that the adolescent, striving desperately to understand and control the new urge that is born in him (or her) after puberty, is, more often than not, completely overwhelmed. The rapid increase in sex crimes and sexual misdemeanours, not only in the West but even in our country, which is troubling those interested in the welfare of youth in all countries, is the direct consequence of the cumulative effect of our sex-ridden age on the modern child.

That sex crimes, and emotional maladjustments caused by sex, have shown a steep rise in modern times in all countries including India is a reasonably well-established fact. What

is not quite so easy to pin down is the cause, or causes, of this increase.

The scientists are ready with their answer. Ignorance, they state, is the root cause of modern sex crimes and the remedy is simple—'Hide nothing from the child, tell him in a free, frank, and unashamed manner the biological facts of sex, which is, after all, as natural an instinct as the urge to eat and drink.' Some even go further and advocate that such sex instruction should not be given privately to individuals, but publicly, in the cinema or in the classroom, and to mixed audiences of boys and girls. One authority outlines his blueprint for sex instruction thus: 'Such a course should provide informative, and emotionally neutral, approaches to such subjects as personal and community hygiene, nutrition and sexual reproduction.' This is the popular viewpoint of today, one which is not only advocated in theory, but is being currently put into practice, especially in the U.S.A. and Great Britain.

The motive that inspires this viewpoint, i.e. to reduce sex crimes among adolescents, and to enable them to adjust themselves to sex, is laudable. But the tenets on which it is founded are either false or of limited application; and the methods that are deduced from these tenets are little short of lethal. It is not by accident that the countries which have most fully applied the doctrines enumerated here have the biggest incidence of sexual juvenile delinquency, and the steepest divorce rates in the world.

And no wonder. The theory that a full and frank revelation of the facts of life to the child will save him from sex problems is based on the dual fallacy that the child's sexual troubles all spring from ignorance, and that mere sex knowledge will by itself help him to avoid or master them. The shoe is often on the other foot; sexual delinquency, more often than not, is the consequence of too much and too precocious sex knowledge rather than too little. Moreover, just as instruction is not education, so also mere knowledge is no protection by itself, and may often be a positive incentive to sexual delinquency because the adolescent is sorely tempted to put his incomplete knowledge into practice, and to taste of the forbidden fruit. Hence sex knowledge, instead of being a remedy,

frequently becomes the reason for sexual misdemeanours and maladjustments. The main defect of this naturalistic approach to the problem of sex education is, however, that it treats sex as a purely physiological urge, whereas modern psychology has shown, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that sex in man and woman is infinitely more complex than the simple animal instinct to mate and reproduce the species; that it has its moral, emotional, mental and spiritual aspects; and that it exerts a profound effect upon the entire personality and life of man and woman.

The evil fruits of the popular but misguided theory of complete sex freedom have in recent years caused a wholesome reaction against it. This reaction is, surprisingly, most noticeable in modern Russia which, under the Communist regime, has passed from a policy of 'free love' to an almost puritanical conception of sex. Free dissemination of sex knowledge in school, and the encouragement of promiscuous sexual relationships between boys and girls and men and women, which were the order of the day in the 1920's and 30's, did not produce the earthly paradise dreamed of; instead they led, inevitably, to 'a laxity and vulgarization between men and women, caused psychological problems, and unhappiness and disruption of the family . . . . . and led to a sex life full of unhappiness and misery to millions'. Hence the new puritanical party line on sex in the U.S.S.R. The application of the same policy of uninhibited freedom in the United States led to similar evil effects which have brought about a similar reaction in sensible circles. Thus we have Professor Munsterberg, a prominent American professor, stating bluntly and unequivocally, 'The popular method of today is doing incalculable harm, is utterly wrong, and is one of the most dangerous causes of that evil which it hopes to destroy.'

Sex is a vital part of life, and sex education claims to be a preparation for life. The question is therefore no longer whether sex education is necessary; it is one of finding the right way of imparting it most efficaciously to the growing child. The problem may, for convenience, be divided into four interrelated parts. How can sex education be best given? When, where and by whom should it be given? We shall attempt an answer to each of these queries.



Since each child's mental and emotional make-up and rate of development is unique, no cut-and-dried method applicable to all children even of the same age can be laid down. Generally speaking, sex instruction should be imparted to the child as it develops and as it is required and asked for. If a child asks an awkward question, he should not be told a deliberate lie but answered simply, unemotionally, and in a straightforward manner, befitting his age and emotional development. This does not mean that a child asking where his baby brother came from should be given the 'facts of life' from A to Z; that would be as great a mistake as repeating the Stork story. To quote an authority: 'The fact that a child asks where children come from does not mean one must explain it, through and through. We do not need to burden him prematurely with knowledge beyond his understanding. The proper time will come for such knowledge and there is no danger in answering them, "You're still a little tyke, and when you grow up you'll find out".'

Sex instruction, given at the proper time and in the proper manner, is important, but it is only a small part of sex education. Mere information is not enough; the character-formation of the child is much more important, and in this task the psychological, religious, and moral approach are of greater importance than the biological. Sex education is education for human love, in which sex is only one factor, hence any overemphasis on the physiological aspect will produce a warped and unbalanced approach to love, marriage, and parenthood. The whole personality of the man or woman is involved, and sex education is probably, in the last analysis, much more a question of mental than of physical hygiene. We must aim at a well-developed, rounded personality, which is not emotionally maladjusted, and to achieve this we must approach the question from all sides—physiological, psychological, moral and spiritual—for only then will the sex education we give be complete and effective.

Sex education, from earliest times, has been the prerogative of the home. In recent times, however, the school has stepped in, and, on the plea that the home is not doing its duty, has usurped the responsibility. Courses on sex instruction are a feature of the curricula of progressive schools in England

and America, and not a few educationists claim that since parents are either too backward or too ignorant to impart such education to their children, the school is the normal and natural place for it. This in our opinion is a grave mistake. If parents are unwilling or unfitted to impart such education, the obvious remedy is to educate the parents, not only to bring home to them their responsibility, but to enable them to discharge it effectively. The home is the proper place for sex education, and a happy and normal home life and the example of loving and self-sacrificing parents is an essential part of such education. The influence of parental example is tremendous; it needs, however, to be complemented by a certain amount of knowledge, given naturally and without excitement, to the growing child. The parents are the best people to impart such knowledge for they understand their children best, and will know just when and how much information to give. Class lessons aiming, as they must, at a non-existent 'average child', will in most cases do much more harm than good, especially to those children who are oversensitive or emotionally underdeveloped for their age. To give such instruction to boys or girls separately is bad enough; to give it, as is done in some schools, to mixed classes is little short of fatal. It is just such a policy, still widely pursued in the U.S.A. in spite of its disastrous consequences, that recently provoked a spirited protest from an American mother, Mrs Ruth Fay, in *The Reader's Digest* under the challenging title 'Leave My Child Alone'. Mrs Fay exposes the harm that is being done by indiscriminate sex instruction in schools, and ends with the categorical statement, with which all sane people will agree: 'Sex education is not a function of the school. It is an integral part of the child-parent relationship. It belongs to the home, and I want it to stay there'.

Sex education is, then, primarily the responsibility of the home, and a child's parents are his best educators. This does not mean the school and the teachers cannot render valuable assistance in supplementing the education of the home. Sometimes, indeed, a teacher may be in a better position to help and guide the growing child, either because the parents are indifferent or the child is too shy to discuss such matters with them. Much can, and should, be done through the

study of biology and hygiene and, in addition, mothercraft and domestic science for the girls, towards preparing adolescents for love and parenthood. And finally, the school, by its emphasis on self-discipline, and character-formation and by sublimating the powerful sex impulses of the adolescent in games and creative activities, has a great contribution to make to the development of an integrated and harmonious personality, which is the best type of indirect sex education. Parent and teacher, doctor and priest, school, home, and church all have parts to play, and, if they work in partnership, their objective will easily and naturally be attained.

Lastly there is the question as to the best time for imparting sex education. The Freudians hold that the sex impulse awakens almost at birth, and hence that sex education in the widest sense cannot begin too early. This view is supported by the famous Kinsey Report. 'Patterns of (sexual) behaviour', state its authors, 'are products of attitudes and attributes and may begin shaping long before the child has acquired very much, of any, information.' The shaping of these attitudes begins in the home, and a happy home life during infancy and childhood, visible love between the parents and by them for the child, and a willingness to answer the child's occasional easily satisfied curiosity about sex in a manner suited to his years, is the best sex education for the child.

When the tide of adolescence begins to rise in the growing child after puberty, sex education of a more formal, direct, and complete type becomes necessary. The adolescent, bewildered by the new urges that awaken in him, is apt to lose his emotional, moral and spiritual bearings, hence it is at this age that sexual maladjustments and delinquencies are most prevalent. Parents and adults, in spite of the fact that they themselves once experienced the storms and stresses of adolescence, are apt to be unsympathetic and harsh towards the unpredictable and difficult adolescent, at a time when he or she most needs their help, guidance, and sympathy. The sex education of adolescents is a difficult and delicate task that can only be successfully undertaken by someone in whom the adolescent can trust and confide—his parents or a favourite teacher, doctor, relative or priest. Each child will have to be approached in a different manner, and the sex

instruction given adapted to his emotional and mental development. Free and intimate talks in a sane and healthily emotional atmosphere are probably the best solution; in them not merely sex information but sex morality must be inculcated, and the adolescent made to realize the beauty and the purpose of sex, and the physical and moral dangers of abuse of this creative power in him. Religious and moral sanctions should supplement physiological ones, for an adolescent needs help from every possible source to curb and control the powerful impulses of sex. Most juvenile sex delinquencies arise in periods of boredom, inactivity and idleness, and are the consequence of a lack of self-discipline. Prevention is better than cure, and, if the adolescent is kept reasonably busy and helped towards self-discipline, he will gradually learn to control sex. Sex education should be continued during youth, when it should take the form of education for parenthood, and should be completed by and during marriage.

Sex education given in this way will enable the child to grow into a normal and healthy adult who will take sex in his stride, and use it as a means of enriching his personality and living a happy life.



THE PECKHAM EXPERIMENT IN FAMILY  
EDUCATION

THE family has been from time immemorial the basic unit of society, and sociologists, however much they may differ on other matters, have agreed that a physically and spiritually healthy society can only be built on the basis of healthy families. The normal family has all the potentialities of healthy, physical, social and spiritual growth inherent in its very make-up, but these potentialities will only come to fruition if the family is placed in a suitable milieu which provides rich and varied opportunities for physical, social and spiritual development. Unfortunately in our day, such an ideal milieu rarely exists; the social isolation of the modern urbanized family forms similar living cells in the social organism, and the lack of suitable opportunities for personal; family and social activity and experience generally inhibits the healthy growth of body and mind in the members of a family and leaves them frustrated and underdeveloped. To remedy these defects and to cater for the physical and psychological needs and abilities of families, progressive countries such as England and the U.S.A. have pioneered Health and Community Centres, which developing countries like India are trying to emulate and these are doing much to compensate for the deficiencies of urban and rural family life. But these admirable institutions, though valuable in themselves, suffer from two major defects which negate much of the good they do—they tend to divide up and compartmentalize the various aspects of healthy development—physical health in the former, and social needs in the latter—and their stress is on the individuals in a family, rather than on the family as a whole.

To seek a remedy for these defects, the Peckham Experiment was begun, under the auspices of the Hally Steward Research Trust early in the 20s in England by a small, capable and enthusiastic band of progressive doctors and socio-

logists, under the direction of Dr. G. Scott-Williamson, in a small house in South London. Though it was called simply a 'Health Centre', it was in reality an entirely new departure from the conventional Health Centres; not only did it incorporate the best elements of a health centre, a psychological clinic, and a community centre, but it was in addition a research laboratory which aimed not only to prevent and cure disease but to re-define health from a social, as well as an individual standpoint.

This element of research was the most striking and vital feature of the Peckham Experiment—it was above all, as its authors defined it, a 'biological experiment' to study the true nature of individual and family health, and the conditions under which they could best be promoted. Health to the small band of enthusiasts who manned the Centre was not merely something negative—the absence of disease—but positive; not static but a dynamic living thing born of action and growth in a suitable environment; not existing in a vacuum but essentially functional; not flourishing in isolation but in the family. They held that complete health of mind and body was essential to human well-being, progress and happiness, and that such health was only possible in and through the family.

This emphasis not so much on the individual but on individuals-in-the-family, 'the living structure of society', was the second unique characteristic of the Peckham Experiment. The unit of living for this group of sociological searches was not the isolated individual but the family. 'The living unit which alone can give a living society.' They regarded the family not only as social but as a biological unity, hence aimed to provide opportunities for healthy growth and living for the family as a whole and not for its individual members in isolation from one another. True family health, the Peckham scientists believe, "can easily come forth from a mutuality of action within a society sufficiently mixed and varied to provide for the needs of the mind and spirit as well as the body" of every member of the family considered as individuals, and of the family as a whole considered as a single biological and sociological unit.

The Peckham group of scientists set about with zest and

enthusiasm to provide such a society. The result has been the creation of the Peckham Health Centre which may be described as a health clinic on the model of a family club, catering for the physical, biological, social and educational needs of all the members of the family unit—father, mother and children. The experimental or empirical aim, however, was predominant; the centre did not aim to provide a cut-and-dried environment and programme of action, but make available wide and varied opportunities for the development of individual and family potentialities and aptitudes and to put at the disposal of its members a common pool of knowledge and experience on which to draw which will enable them to promote their complete development. The stress was on the family, hence only whole families were accepted as members, though courting couples were encouraged to join as not only were they 'embryo families' but the scientists felt they could accomplish much through pre-marriage education with a family-in-the-making than with the accomplished fact.

In the Centre itself every member of the family is catered for—there is pre-natal education for the mother and father, and Nurseries and a Nursery School for Infants, and it is hoped when funds permit, to establish a Junior and a Senior School so that a child will be able to have his whole education at the Centre in the heart of the family and not divorced from it as happens in the cases of most children. Meanwhile a wide variety of physical and social activities—gymnastics, games, swimming, music and dancing, amateur dramatics—exist for school-going children and young adolescent workers, who generally join their parents at the Centre after school or after work, and similar activities are provided on an adult scale, for father and mother.

In the formal and informal education given at the Centre, and in the choice of activities by the members, the stress is on spontaneity and freedom—the Centre merely aims to provide stimuli by its provision of rich and varied opportunities for mental, physical and social development; it is up to the members to use or not to use them. A striking feature which makes the Centre a real Family Club is that there is no segregation either of the sexes or of the children and the adults; children

and young people share freely in all activities with their parents and other adults, for the organizers are convinced that children and adolescents can only mature in contact with one another, their parents and older members of the Community. This happy mingling of youth and age, enthusiasm and experience enriches both, and family activities give birth to a deep sense of 'family unity' that is the best safeguard against all those forces in modern society which are destroying the unity, stability and value of the family group. The activities of the Centre cater primarily for the physical and recreational and social needs of its family members but the deeper needs of mind and spirit are not neglected, being as they are, an essential part of true health of "wholeness."

In the Centre the entire emphasis is on voluntary and spontaneous activity and growth; there is no attempt at regimentation or compulsion, nor even any effort at "conditioning" or moral persuasion. Members can join all the activities or in none, the worthwhileness and fascination of the activities going on around them is its own attraction, and if that fails the organizers admit they have failed. Members plan and run their own activities, these wax and wane periodically, old activities losing their popularity and being replaced by fresh enthusiasms. This free and spontaneous birth, development and decay of the Centre's activities gives them variety and fluidity and a dynamic character, and the constant action and interaction promotes social training and growth. There are no stereotyped rules for the organization of activities nor any provision leaders or 'experts' to guide them, unless the members ask for help; members of each internal society or group draw up their own rules, and, given the right circumstances, natural leaders emerge and are much more willingly obeyed than any outside expert. In this way each individual and family makes its own unique contribution to the richness and complexity of the life at the Centre, which, in turn, becomes to each member family an open door to a richer and fuller life for parents and children, by providing an environment in which their physical and social capacities can progressively find expression and fulfilment, and a continuous and constantly growing storehouse of vital first hand



knowledge and experience of the fundamentals of healthy physical and social living on which the members can draw *ad lib.* By making the full use of this environment and this precious pool of wisdom and experience the parents are enabled to lead fuller and more satisfying lives in living contact with their children, and the children are enabled to develop physically and socially in a way in which nature intended they should.

The Peckham Health Centre then provides a stimulating environment and the very building itself is functionally designed to promote the purposes of its founder. It is a magnificent structure built almost entirely of steel and glass so that it not only catches whatever sunshine is available in fog-ridden London but everybody can see what is going on in all parts of the building and the very sight of all this pleasurable activity is a well-nigh irresistible incentive to the onlookers to share in it. The building is three-storeyed; on the ground floor are a well-equipped gymnasium, a learner's swimming-pool, a theatre and the children's Nurseries; on the first floor a large cafeteria and hall to the right of which is the Centre's proudest possession—a gleaming swimming-pool which is clearly visible through the glass partition that divides it from the Cafeteria; and on the top floor away from the bustle of the lower floors is the medical block, work room, and a well-stocked library and reading room. None of these activities, except what goes on in the Medical section, is private; the glass walls make them clearly visible to anyone in any part of the building. This not only enables parents to watch their children exercising, or swimming or playing while having a cup of tea in the Cafeteria, but the continuous sight of the building humming with activity is a challenge and is a stimulus to the mere observer to shed his shyness or unsociableness and to join in the fun. Furniture is light and easily movable. and this contributes much to the fluidity of activity in the Centre, and to the dynamic ever-changing character of its life.

The Peckham Health Centre was built and planned to accommodate 2000 worker-families; its membership is constantly fluctuating but remains stable around the 1000 mark. The present building was built mainly through voluntary

subscriptions, and its modest membership fee per family and the small charge for participation in the various activities just about enable it to pay its way. Lack of funds has considerably retarded the progress of the experiment and the fulfilment of all the dreams of its founders, still much has been achieved and there is no doubt as to the success of the experiment as a whole.

A day, or even a few hours spent at the Centre is a fascinating experience. Life begins at about 2 p.m. when the Centre opens its inviting and hospitable doors to the long queue of mothers with their prams who are patiently awaiting its opening. They wheel their prams into the building, park them, deposit their precious freight in the skilled hands of the Nursery attendants, and then seek the sewing or knitting rooms, or go upstairs for a consultation with the Doctors. All is quiet and peaceful till 3 p.m. when the first of the liberated school children begin to arrive. They come in a steady stream till four and soon the whole building—the swimming-pool, the gymnasium, the skating rink etc. are alive with their happy cries and enjoyable activity. At about 6 p.m. the mothers set out for home with their babies to prepare supper, and their place is taken by the fathers who keep their young children's company in the swimming-pool or the billiard tables. At Supper time there is a temporary lull in the activities of the Centre but life begins again about 7-30 when the working boys and girls, young men and young women, the former very conscious and proud of their newly-granted freedom to stay out late, begin to drop in and soon they are joined in dancing, dramatics, swimming and indoor badminton and other fun and games by their parents, after they have finished supper and put the 'little ones' to bed. From 8-30 to 10-30 p.m. the crescendo of the day's activities mounts to its apex and the building pulsates with the rich and varied activities of from 500-1000 people of all ages from 14 to 90. At 10-30 p.m. on ordinary days, the happy family groups leave and another crowded day in the life of the Centre comes to an enjoyable end.

This sketchy account of a typical day in the life of the Peckham Health Centre may give the impression that the Centre is just a social club, under a new name and with some

original features. This would be a misconception. The Centre is primarily a Research laboratory designed to study the conditions of healthy family life, and experiment and observation of the multifarious activities that go on under its roof by skilled Doctors, Social Workers and Psychologists, who, because of the transparent walls, can observe freely without anyone being conscious that he or she is under observation, remain the keynotes of its work and its *raison d'être*. On the positive side the Doctors wish to make use of the knowledge they acquire to help the member families as units, and the individuals who compose them, to an all-round development of mind and body in a carefully planned environment. The chief stress remains on the promotion of physical and mental health. Hence there is a thorough medical examination of all the members of the family on entry, and a complete overhaul once a year. The results of these examinations are laid before the family members at a special consultation between the Doctors and the family as a whole, and they are given advice as to the remedying of their defects and deficiencies. But the responsibility for their own health is placed entirely on their shoulders, for they need not accept the advice given them. Finally, skilled medical advice and help is readily available to the member families at all times but especially at critical periods in family history before conception, during pregnancy, which at the Centre is treated not as an illness but as a part of normal and healthy family life, and pregnant mothers are encouraged not to give up sharing in the life of the Centre, during the childhood of the new-born baby and at any other time. While every member of the family is equally well cared for by the Centre, its Directors tend to concentrate on the mothers, for they realize that "if you educate the mother, you educate the family."

The Peckham Centre is thus a family centre in the real sense of the term, and a health centre and a biological and sociological laboratory. But it is much more than the sum of these three vital aspects of its life and activity; to quote its founder "it is a locus in society from which the cultivation of the family—the living cell or unit in Society—can proceed and from which the family sustained in its own growth and

development, can spontaneously evolve as part of a larger whole—a living and organized Society.” It is this welcome emphasis on the family in an age which is tending to atomise society and to undermine the foundations of that healthy family life which is an essential precondition for the development of a healthy society, that makes the Peckham Experiment one of the most significant, impressive, and important socio-biological experiments of our time; an experiment whose vital findings should provide instruction, guidance and inspiration to social scientists all over the world.



## SCHOOL AND SOCIETY

THERE was a happy time in the past when the education of its younger members was a community affair, the School was a community institution, a focal centre round which the life of the community revolved, and the teacher a community representative, and not infrequently a community leader. One of the many ill-effects of the increasing complexity and atomisation of social life, as a result of the first and second Industrial and Technological Revolutions, has been to sever this intimate link between the community and its schools. Schools have tended to withdraw more and more from the world, and to surround themselves with physical and cultural walls, to keep their pupils in and the community outside! And teachers, instead of being familiar, respected and active members of the community have dwindled into 'specialists,' practising a "mystery craft", discreetly hidden from the vulgar gaze of the rude and scoffing multitude! "To some degree," to quote a leading writer, "every school is separated from life by high walls, visible and invisible; it holds reality at arms' length."

This isolation of the schools from the life of the community to some extent is natural and proper, but carried to extremes, it has produced one of the most serious deficiencies in modern education—its excessive bookishness, its unreality, and lack of vital contact with and of relevance to life.

Education should prepare a child not only to earn his livelihood but to live a complete life in the society of which he is a part, and in which he will have to live, and move, and have his being on leaving school.

Most schools today do neither effectively. The education they provide, excessively narrow, academic, bookish and ill-attuned to life, gives the child little or no awareness and understanding of the world in which he is living and will live when he leaves school, while their overall set-up—their atmosphere, curricula, methods, textbooks and discipline—are often ill adapted to develop in the child those character-

istics and abilities which are necessary for the citizen in a modern democracy. The net result is that the child is educated in one idiom, and lives and will live in another, and the work of the schools appears to be the antithesis of real life, with unfortunate consequences.

Modern education also, especially in India, tends to be excessively individualistic, with competition as its keynote; it rightly aims at the development of the individual, but in doing so often tends to under-emphasise his social needs and responsibilities. The true aim of education is the fullest development not so much of individuality as of personality which word has a definite social content; indeed the social aspects of personality are as vital as the individual, for the personality cannot be fully or properly developed except in contact with one's fellows in society. "Man was not made for himself alone", nor can he develop normally or completely in isolation from society—for man was created a social being, and can best fulfil himself in, and to a considerable extent, for society.

The process of education in the home, and equally much in the school which is the principal means by which a child is prepared for his life in and for society, must therefore be largely a social affair, a community matter. The school exists not only to develop its pupils fully as individuals, but, as an organ of society's purposes; its dual functions are to transmit to the rising generation the social and cultural heritage of their community, state and nation, and to endow them with the creative power of modifying and adding to that heritage. This community aspect of a good school should never be minimised or lost sight of. The school can, does and should belong to the community and the community to the school. Each should complement, act and interact upon the other to leaven and enthuse it, as far as lies in their respective power to do so, so that there will be a two-way influence between schools and the community, and the community and the schools.

The dual social function of the school is, according to a famous educationist, "to communicate the type, and to provide for growth beyond the type" so as to make social progress possible, since all progress springs from creative

individuals. To fulfil this dual function, schools should be planned with due regard to the needs, activities and compulsions of the society outside their walls, and should aim to prepare the child both for his personal and his social responsibilities in the society. To do this effectively schools must maintain a close and dynamic relationship with the community, to assimilate what is best in it, and to contribute in their turn the best they can offer to its all-round growth and progress. "The schools", to quote John Dewey, "cannot immediately escape from the ideal set by prior social conditions. But it should contribute through the type of emotional and intellectual disposition which it forms to the improvement of these conditions." This does not mean that schools can by themselves hope to bring about a social revolution or promote the "socialist pattern" of society; it does mean that educational planning and social planning must not only go on side by side but must be carefully integrated as they complement and complete one another.

The ultimate objective of all educational planning is to produce, what the late Sir Fred Clarke called an "Educative Society", in which schools will be one, albeit a vitally important one, of the many educational influences that will play upon and mould the growing child. Further, in any attempt to create an "educative society", schools and other educational institutions of higher education should form the spearhead of advance, for only education can produce the necessary revolution in the climate of opinion in a country that can make that educational-social revolution possible which is needed in this era of radical change in which we are living at present. It can perhaps best accomplish this task by making its students realise the nature of the society in which they are living, that this society is their own, that they have a definite stake in and responsibility towards it, and a still more vital part to play if they wish to remould it nearer to their hearts' desire.

This wide and more comprehensive role of the school is more important in the India of to-day and the India of to-morrow that is taking shape than it ever was in the past. A quotation from the eminent sociologist Prof. J. Oldham will make this clear "Where a social tradition is firm and

effective", says Prof. Oldham "no great harm is done if schools confine themselves in the main to teaching distinctively school subjects. The influences that touch the deeper springs of character are supplied in other ways. Religion, tradition, the home, prevailing customs and the institutions of national life all exert their influence on mind and heart. It is far otherwise when the social tradition is in a process of dissolution (as it is in India today). It then becomes important that the school should assume wider functions and definitely set itself to the task of creating and fostering this sense of obligation and loyalty to the country". Society in India is today in a state of flux, turmoil, confusion and dissolution due to a multiplicity of causes, hence schools will have to shoulder much wider social responsibilities than in the past.

Education, as John Dewey insisted, is not merely a preparation for life, it is life. The school must, therefore, not only be linked at all points with the life of the community, but it must also itself provide adequate knowledge and first-hand experience of community living. The school is a miniature community, and should strive to be, as far as is practicable, an "idealised epitome" of the world outside its walls by providing a fair sampling of activities that reflect the life of the larger society, by direct participation in which the child will not merely experience the joy of community living but "learn by living" his rights and duties as a member of any community. To quote Prof. H. C. Dent "A typical school of the present day is to be regarded not merely as a "place of learning" but as a social unit or society of a peculiar kind in which the old and the younger members, the teachers and the taught share a common life, subject to a constitution in which all are in their several ways consenting and co-operating parties, pursuing purposes, which though not coincident are nevertheless correlative". And Dr. Zakir Hussain in his Patel lectures some years ago stressed the necessity of schools being more aware of their role as training grounds for young people in community living and social responsibility. Schools, according to Dr. Hussain, should give more thought and devote more time to this central function of theirs. "In order to educate for social responsibility", he stated, "these insti-



tutions should themselves be organised as units of community living. One learns to swim by swimming in water; one learns to serve by serving a society. Unless this principle becomes the livelihood of our educational institutions, all other reform will be just patchwork. For how else will moral values of a sound social organisation be experienced, except by living as a member of such an organisation." An enjoyable and full community life in school is the best preparation for the child's future life in the large society; but such an education must be supplemented by direct teaching to bring home to the child, so far as he can grasp it, the nature and working of the complete society in which he will live on leaving school, and his rights and responsibilities as a participating member of it. What is termed "education for citizenship", considered in its practical and theoretical aspects, can no more be left to chance or to be learnt in later life. It must be at least, begun in school so that the child will have the necessary foundation on which to build before he leaves school. We shall treat this subject at greater length in a later chapter.

The necessity of linking education functionally with society, and of bringing the school into more intimate and vital contact with the life of the community so as to make the education it gives a better preparation for life than heretofore is universally admitted by progressive educationists both abroad and in our own country. What stands in the way of reform is the difficulty of finding ways and means for the school to implement its social programme, and fulfil its social responsibilities to the community which entrusts to it the education of the rising generation.

Educationists differ both with regard as to the extent to which, and the manner in which the schools can fulfil their inescapable social obligations. In a short chapter, one can only suggest a few of the ways in which the school may be brought into closer contact with the community outside its walls, so as to make the education it provides a better preparation for life. To begin with education, especially in its larger stages, needs to be given a much more definite vocational bent than it has had in the past. Vocational education, in its broadest interpretation, is an essential part of a truly liberal education; there can be no true liberal education that is not

also vocational, and no true vocational education that is not liberal. Man's character and personality and outlook on life are moulded by his work to a very great extent, and a man who is contented and competent in his work is well on the way to achieve true happiness.

The average child leaves school with little idea of the job for which he is best suited, and which will best promote his material and spiritual well-being, and with little knowledge, skill and experience that will be of value to him in entering and making progress in his chosen field of work. This is the main reasons why many adolescents are uneasy at school, and regard their academic education as being, to greater or less extent, a waste of precious time. There is an urgent need for education during adolescence, while not sacrificing its essentially liberal character, to be more definitely orientated to the vocational needs and abilities of the individual pupils who should not only be given the basic skills, knowledge, attitudes and values on which to build when they begin work, but also provided with educational and vocational guidance to save them from blind-alley jobs, and to assist them to find the work best suited to their age, abilities, and aptitudes.

To achieve this objective and to present education in terms more acceptable to the students and their parents, the school programme, especially in the last years, while remaining school-based should be increasingly and deliberately outgoing—a gradual and well-planned initiation into the adult world of work and leisure. Such a programme will mean taking students mentally, and often physically, beyond the school walls and bringing men and ideas from the world outside its walls into the schools. "The last years at school", states the Newsom Report, *Half Our Future*, 'need a unifying theme to give coherence and purpose when the pupils themselves are growing restive. Such a theme can be found in the idea of preparation for real life'. For a small minority of pupils, secondary education which has the broadly vocational motive of preparation for the University may be quite satisfying, for the vast majority this type of education has little significance. 'Most boys and girls', to quote the Newsom Report once again, 'want their education to be

practical and realistic. They feel a good deal better if they can see it as vocational. They like to have some say in choosing what they will learn. We behave that these four words—practical, vocational, realistic, choice—provide keys which can be used to let even the less-able boys and girls enter into an educational experience which is genuinely secondary."

Within the school many modifications in curriculum, methods approach will be equally necessary. The curriculum needs to be made less bookish and unreal, and more practical and functional; its aim should be not merely to impart knowledge but to help pupils to apply this knowledge to the practical affairs of life. The more lessons can be given a realistic and adult bias, the better. Book knowledge in all subjects, but especially in the Sciences, the Arts and Crafts, Civics and Current Affairs and Social Studies should be linked with the natural and social environment and with real life problems, and the social implications of every subject should be deliberately brought out and emphasised. To achieve this purpose, there should be a two-way traffic between the school and the society outside; the public should be kept informed about what is going on in the schools and by means of environmental surveys and educational visits to factories, courts and other places of interest pupils should be made aware of the social life around them, special care being taken through expert briefing to relate these experiences to school works; and men and women from all walks of life should be invited to give the students first-hand information about an insight into their life and work. Methods of teaching, too, must cease to be exclusively of the 'talk and chalk' or exercise-book variety, the radio and other audio-visual arts should be used to give direct contact with learning by doing and by first-hand experience should form an essential complement to the former, and group methods should supplement individual methods to make children realise the joy and efficacy of co-operative endeavour. Everything possible in fact should be done to integrate school and community resources to improve the educational opportunities of children.

The school, in short, must not live in isolation from but should win the active trust and confidence of people outside its walls and establish dynamic links with the many-sided

life of the community and with all these other community institutions, such as the Home and the Church or Temple, which also have vitally important roles to play in the total education of the future citizen. The school does not exist only for the pupils and the staff, nor can it function efficiently only through their efforts; the school is a community institution, and needs community support and assistance if it is fully to achieve its social objectives. 'The schools', to quote an eminent educationist, can no longer afford to remain as isolated islands of light and learning amidst a vast sea of darkness and ignorance in which the community has been living for centuries past. They have to take note of the widening gulf between the community and the products they turn out, and to take immediate steps to check the drift and establish close relationship between the two.

Schools, in short, must work increasingly to promote harmony and mutual understanding between themselves and the communities they serve, for only by genuine and dynamic co-operation and understanding will schools be able to fulfil their vital function as handmaids of society and to win the trust of the public, parents and the community at large whom they endeavour to serve.



## XVII

### DEMOCRACY AND EDUCATION

INDIA, as every schoolboy knows is the world's largest democracy. What neither he, nor, if recent Attitude Studies in this field in India have any validity, his teachers realise is the true nature and content of the term 'Democracy,' and the long and arduous struggle that lies ahead of us before real democracy in the fullest sense of the word is won. Democracy has come to be a symbol for more than a form of government; democracy is a way of life, with freedom as its keynote, and it has several facets, political, economic, social, personal, cultural and spiritual, the manifold implications and potentialities which must be clearly realised and actualised before India becomes a real democracy, in fact as well as in aspiration, in practice as well as in theory. The principal objective of education in a democracy will be to help towards this consummation devoutly to be wished, for, to quote Mr. M. C. Chagla, "If you believe in democracy, it is necessary that it must be an educated democracy."

Democracy is not only an ideal; it is, in a sense, a mirage, for the nearer a nation approaches the goal, the further it appears to recede. Politically, England has had a democratic government for over a century, but, despite the upheaval caused by the two World Wars, and a silent social revolution that has been going on over the past fifty years, she has still to establish democracy in the fullest sense of the term by breaking down the economic, social, educational and cultural barriers that exist between the various social classes in England even today. The U.S.A., unfettered to a large extent by the shackles and traditions of the past, has made more rapid strides towards establishing, not merely a political but also a socio-economic pattern of democracy, but, as Vance Packard points out in *The Status Seekers*, the U.S.A., in the second half of the 20th century, is rapidly developing its own class system in which "all men are equal, but some are more equal than others." If, then, the world's leading democracies,

despite more favourable historical circumstances and considerably greater resources, still have a long way to go before they are real democracies in the fullest sense of the term, it would be foolish to expect our infant democracy to achieve in a couple of decades what England and the U.S.A. have been unable to accomplish in a much longer period of time.

A consideration of some basic facts will make the position much clearer, and help us to realise the magnitude of the problem facing us. Less than twenty years ago India won her freedom, and, after long and mature consideration, decided to transform herself into a secular democratic Republic. This ideal was enshrined in her New Constitution (1950), which in its Directive Principles pledged to establish in the country, within a period of ten years, Justice: social economic and political; Liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship, and Equality of status and opportunity. This was a brave ideal, the more so because, while seminal democratic ideas and institutions like the village panchayats and village schools did exist in India prior to the British conquest, democracy in the modern connotation of the term is not native to the soil. Indeed, to quote Mr. Josiah Hennessey, "India's New Constitution marked the first successful example of the conscious adoption by one people of a political system, (which implies a whole way of life), from another people of a totally different tradition, for the rights enunciated above guaranteed under the Constitution were based not on Asian but on Western experience, and were relatively alien to traditional Indian thought and outlook." While progressive legislation could and is helping to put the country on the road to achieving its declared ideal of being a secular, democratic republic and Welfare State, based on a socialist pattern of society, yet, from a long-term and definitive point of view, it is only education of the right type that can clothe the dry bones of legislation with flesh, blood and vitality. It is, therefore, on the education of this country that the future of this country as a democracy depends, and our educational system must be so fashioned as to foster in the men, women and children of the country those habits, values, attitudes, and qualities which will enable them, on the one hand, to shoulder worthily the manifold responsibilities of democratic citizenship, and,

on the other, to counter effectively certain dangerous subversive tendencies and Isms, such as casteism, communalism, linguism, parochialism and communism which are rife in India and which are threatening to undermine that unity and sense of community and oneness which are basic to democracy.

Education, in good measure and of the right kind, is an indispensable handmaid to democracy. It can also, unfortunately, in the hands of ignorant or unscrupulous politicians become a weapon for the destruction of democracy, and the establishment of a totalitarian form of government. Hence it is necessary, if education in and for democracy is to fulfil its purpose, for us to examine in some detail the fundamental bases of democracy in the light of our New Constitution and in the dynamic context of our past history and tradition and our present aspirations and needs.

Democracy, as we have stated earlier, is much more than a political creed or a method of government, it represents a certain outlook and climate of opinion, a way of feeling, thinking and acting and living that embraces every aspect of every individual's life in society. "Democracy," to quote Jawaharlal Nehru, "is not only political, not only economic, but something of the mind. It involves equality of opportunity as far as possible in the economic and political domain. It involves the freedom of the individual to grow and to make the best of his capacities and abilities." The reason for existence and the *fons et origo* of a democracy is a profound belief in the uniqueness and the intrinsic worth of every individual, and in his inalienable right to life, liberty, equality and the pursuit of happiness in brotherhood with others. "A democracy," states the Mudaliar Report, "is based on faith in the dignity and worth of every single individual. This innate worthwhileness cannot be eclipsed either by economic, racial or social considerations." The individual in a democracy, in short, is an end in himself, not a means to an end as he is in a totalitarian society and, in the dictum of Sir Percy Nunn, "Individuality is the ideal of life and of society."

But no man is an island sufficient unto himself. No man can live or develop alone, and both for his own wholesome

development and the good of the society in which he lives, and moves, and has his being, he must be educated in such a way that he is not only fit to live but fit to live with by developing those special qualities, attitudes and values which can make for a happy and fruitful life in a democratic society.

These qualities, attitudes and values are many and multi-faceted. Foremost among them is a sincere belief in the spiritual equality and brotherhood of man under the Fatherhood of God, a deep catholic spirit of tolerance that makes men not merely tolerate but welcome differences of all kinds as making for the wealth of society, the development of a tender social conscience and a passion for social justice, an unshakeable belief in individual freedom of thought, belief and action, and a willingness to see and understand another's point of view, even if it runs directly counter to our own; and, finally, a spirit of true patriotism involving, interiorly, a deep awareness and appreciation of the national heritage, a frank recognition of national weakness, a spirit of service of one's fellow-men, and a willingness to sacrifice all, even life itself, if necessary, to promote the welfare and to preserve the honour and integrity of the Motherland.

These are, in the proverbial nutshell, the individual and social bases, dynamics and goals of true democracy, irrespective of time and place. In India, because of her past history and because of the emergence of new currents, stresses and strains since Independence, there are certain further and special democratic objectives to be striven after, the elimination of the evils of casteism, linguism and communalism, the liberation of the masses from the shackles of poverty, disease, illiteracy, discrimination and superstitious traditions, and the encouragement of true secularism, which Mr. Chagla recently hailed as one of the greatest contributions which India has made to modern thought, without ignoring the fundamentally religious outlook on life which is one of the enduring and characteristic features of Indian life and culture, and the fostering of what Dr. Radhakrishnan recently referred to as "the principal values of Indian civilisation, the freedom of the human spirit and the unity of mankind."

India is committed to democracy and to the democratic way of life, in all its fullness, not only because of its obvious



advantages, but also because, as our great philosopher President recently pointed out, "the creativity operating within human life commits us to democracy, to its belief in the worth of the individual person." This being so it is the duty of all Indian Educationists, Heads and teachers and parents to do all they can to develop within themselves a deep sense of personal commitment to all that democracy connotes; for, as Prof. K. G. Saiyadain observes in his book *Education, Culture and the Social Order*. "In so far as democracy stands for respect of the individual, for the encouragement of the uniqueness of the human being rather than the imposition of a set pattern, for the free discussion and friendly clash of ideas out of which may emerge truth and progressive thought and for tolerance of cultural differences, an educationist cannot but lend his support to it." Unequivocal support to democracy must, however, be based on a clear awareness of all that democracy implies, and on the willingness and ability to impart both to children and to adults knowledge and conviction about the nature, working and essential worthwhileness of a democracy so as to foster in them those attitudes, aspirations, habits and values that will enable them to become good citizens of a democracy.

We will not deal in this short chapter with the type of education necessary for good citizenship in a democracy, this will be dealt with in greater detail in another chapter. We should, however, in the light of what has been said earlier about the nature and scope of democracy and the democratic way of life like to underline some of the basic principles and objectives of a truly democratic philosophy of education, which, if put into practice, will help to deliver the goods. The primary stress in a democratic philosophy of education will be on the total development of every individual so as to make him capable of playing his unique role in society with the fullest satisfaction to himself and to his fellows. Education in a democracy puts the individual in the centre of the picture, his abilities, aptitudes, interests and potentialities for growth, indeed it emphasises his essential needs to such an extent that it tends to underemphasise social and national goals. Further, in the education of the individual, democratic education does not identify such education merely

with the imparting of knowledge and skills, important though these are, it lays primary stress on the training of character, the development of an all-round and many-sided personality, and the inculcation of democratic interests, attitudes, habits and values.

The intellectual goal of education in a democracy is to encourage students to think rationally and fearlessly, to express themselves, in speech and writing, clearly and intelligibly; the physical goal is positive health of mind and body and not merely absence of diseases or neuroses; the moral and spiritual goal is character formation and the inculcation of specifically democratic values and attitudes.

While, however, a democratic philosophy of education stresses the primacy of the individual, it does not for a moment forget that the individual can only attain true fullness of development in, through, and, to a considerable extent, for the society of which he is an integral part. Nor does it turn a blind eye to the social and national needs and goals, for, to quote Mr. M. C. Chagla, "Education is meaningless and has no significance if it does not train the citizen of this country to work for certain targets, certain goals, certain ideals." In a true democratic philosophy of education there is no conflict between national and social goals, and the need for individual freedom, the two complement and complete one another and subserve one another's interests. Accordingly, it will be an important part of the responsibility of educators and teachers to educate the younger generation in India in such a manner that they not merely develop individually to the fullest extent possible, but are ready, willing and able to use their talents and energies to promote the well-being of their countrymen and to help the nation to achieve urgent and vital national goals such as the eradication of the evils of casteism, linguism, communalism, parochialism and religious fanaticism, and the active promotion of national and emotional integration.

The objectives of our national system of education in India will have to be re-oriented, and its organisation and administration refashioned, if we are to be in a position to bring the democratic philosophy of education down to earth, to embody it in educational policies, programmes, institutions and per-

sonnel. Equal educational opportunity for all, irrespective of caste, creed and community or the financial position of their parents, to the fullest possible education suited to their individual abilities and aptitudes, should be the ideal of educational policies and programmes in a democracy. To quote Mr. Chagla once again, "Opportunities must be provided for every one who has the capacity and abilities to reach the top. It is not enough to provide the top, we must provide opportunities for everyone to reach the top." If those policies and programmes are to be fruitfully implemented, educational administration must inevitably be centralised, democratised and humanised. Authoritarianism, and excessive centralisation and red tape should be eschewed, and the human factor should be pre-eminent in dealings between superiors and inferiors of the different levels of educational administration in the State or in the country as a whole. Greater freedom to experiment and to follow their own bent should be given to both Heads and teachers in all types of educational institutions which will inevitably result in less regimentation of their pupils and more creative education. Schools and other types of institutions will in turn, be organised on democratic lines, relationships between masters and pupils will be freer and more humane, and, as they grow to maturity, young boys and girls will be given an increasing measure of self-government and responsibility for the management of their own affairs.

Modern democracy was born in this ancient land in 1947 and is still in its infancy; it will not pass from this stage to full maturity until and unless politicians, educational administrations, Heads and teachers in schools and all other types of educational institutions work together harmoniously, discerningly and unceasingly to consolidate our newly won democracy and to make it an intrinsic part of the way of the feeling, thinking and acting of every child and adult in the country. True democracy cannot live without education, true education will not survive without democracy.

## XVIII

### EDUCATION FOR GOOD CITIZENSHIP TO-DAY

THE necessity for conscious and deliberate education for citizenship, in the modern connotation of the expression, is of comparatively recent origin. In the small, self-sufficient, isolated semi-urban or village communities into which society was divided in the past, the rights and duties of each section of the community were clearly defined, and the growing child learnt the art of being a good citizen by living as a member of his family and his local community and performing the duties proper to his state and stage in life. In these early communities the individual was subordinate to the community, and he was conditioned to fit into the social pattern through his developing membership of a series of social groupings, the family, the clan, the guild, the caste etc.—each with definite obligations, responsibilities, patterns of belief, culture and mores. Education for citizenship in such a setting was relatively easy, for a person could easily comprehend his position in a series of small groups or communities and, by a natural progress from simpler to more complex groupings, be prepared to fill it worthily.

But since the 19th century, under the impact of the cumulative forces of technology, industrialisation and democracy, society has become not only infinitely more complex, but it has been, and is, especially to-day, in such a constant and radical state of flux that it is becoming increasingly difficult to see in it any coherent or stable pattern, or to lay down a blueprint for the ideal society of tomorrow. The small local community of the village or the City State has widened into the National State, and is to-day rapidly widening into the World State. Family and parochial loyalties and responsibilities have during our lifetime broadened into national and international loyalties and responsibilities. The old concept of a stratified society, in which each section lived its own life and was given a different and distinct type of education, quantitatively and qualitatively, is breaking down before



the impact of the egalitarian idea of the classless society, and of equality of educational opportunity for all. The cumulative effect of these changes has been to increase to an unprecedented degree the complexity of modern society and to make life in the modern world much more difficult and complicated than it was in the past.

The man in the street, baffled and bewildered by the ever-increasing complexity of life, has lost his bearings, and wanders about, like a lost sheep, seeking light and guidance. He wishes to be a good citizen, to put his best foot forward for his family, community, his country and his fellowmen, but being ignorant and bewildered is backward to go forward. Hence the urgent necessity for education for citizenship of a new, vigorous and comprehensive type to capitalise his goodwill, and direct it into the right channels. Such an education to be complete must be suited to the needs of the individual and of society. The personal, vocational and avocational needs of the individual are of primary importance, but they cannot be met without reference to the needs of society, and "the modern man's education would be dangerously incomplete without the discipline of learning how to play his part in the State" and the society in which he lives and moves and has his being. The individual must therefore be made aware, not only of his rights but of his responsibilities to society and of his duties as a citizen of a particular State, in order that he may not live for himself alone, but put his talents and gifts at the service of the commonweal. This is what we mean to-day by the expression "education for citizenship".

Citizens are made not born, men tend to regard society as existing to serve their own interests and have to be educated to think and act otherwise. Education for citizenship in a totalitarian country is comparatively easy. The leaders in such states have a clear idea of the type of society they wish to produce, and since the individual is regarded as the instrument of the State, a means and not an end, the citizens of a totalitarian state can easily be conditioned by modern mass communication techniques into fitting like cogs into the State machine. In a democracy the task, however, is much more difficult and complex, both because the primacy of the individual is upheld above that of society—the state and society

exist for the individual, and not vice versa—and because, even though it is clearly recognised that man is a social being with definite social obligations, it is well-nigh impossible to draw up a blueprint of the ideal democratic society.

Education for citizenship in a modern democracy is, therefore, an extremely difficult and complex matter; it is also an extremely urgent one. A totalitarian government depends for its progress primarily on its leaders, a democracy not only on its leaders but on each and every one of its citizens. A democracy is made or broken by the people, in whose hands the power ultimately resides, hence only the right type of citizens can make a true democracy possible.

With Independence we have accepted democracy not only as a form of political government but as a way of life. Schools in a democracy such as ours, therefore, have an inescapable obligation to strengthen and consolidate democracy in this country by consciously educating the younger generation in such a manner that democratic values and attitudes will become so integral a part of their personality that they will become good citizens of a democracy. And further democracy implies that such an education is not only provided for a small elite of leaders, but for the masses who also have to be trained for democratic citizenship. The concept of democracy implies the development of the individual to be a good citizen, who, in the words of Prof. Boyce, "will have intelligence enough to judge public affairs, discernment enough to choose the right officers, self-control enough to accept the decisions of the majority, honest enough to seek the general welfare rather than his own at the expense of the community, public spirit enough to face trouble or even danger for the good of the community."

The Kothari Commission, in its historic report, stresses the obvious need for strengthening the bases of democracy in India by consciously-planned and well-implemented measures for educating both the elite and the masses. "In spite of all odds", says the Commission, "Indian democracy has given a fairly good account of itself. But it will not be permanently viable unless its foundations are deepened by its creation of an educated electorate, a dedicated and competent leadership, and the cultivation of essential values like

self-control, patience, mutual goodwill, and consideration for others, all of which make democracy not only a form of government but a way of life." The formation of citizens in a democracy can no longer be left to chance—they can only be formed by a course of education deliberately planned to achieve this end. Just as the totalitarian countries consciously plan every detail of their education to produce their prototype of the "ideal citizen", so also the democracies, without laying down rigid specifications for the ideal democratic citizen, should have a more or less definite idea what type of man and citizen they desire, and utilise their educational systems to produce him.

"Education", states Marjorie Reeves in her excellent book *Growing up in a Free Society*, "is the process of growing up within a group, or groups." This conception of education tends to overemphasise the importance of the environmental factor in education; but as a definition of education for citizenship it would be admirable. Education for citizenship, besides developing to the full all the potentialities of every individual—physical, mental and spiritual,—must prepare him for what is not a single citizenship but for citizenship of a series of ever-widening groups. Citizenship must, therefore, be conceived of as a lifelong process that begins in the family group, and broadens out, in everwidening circles, till that adult is, in the best sense of the term, a citizen of the world. The various stages of this ever-widening process are not separate or isolated from one another; they are intimately inter-connected and inter-related; a child who is not a good citizen of his family or school community, will never develop into a good citizen of his village, country, or of the world.

Education for citizenship should begin in the family which is the first and most enduring nursery of good citizens. It is, perhaps, only in a good family that the perfect balance is struck between the needs of the individual and the demands of the social group. Every child in a family is regarded as a distinct individual with his own unique rights and needs, but he has to learn to harmonise these with the needs and rights of the other family members for family peace and prosperity. The family being a unit small enough for the

child to understand his position in it, and to realise the basic preconditions of life in any civilised society, provides an invaluable introduction to a complete training in citizenship.

The foundations laid in the family should be consolidated, deepened and extended in the school.

In the school narrow loyalty to the family has to broaden into loyalty towards a larger, more complex and more impersonal community in which it is more difficult to strike that happy balance between the needs of the individual and those of the community than is possible in a family. Every school has a dual function to perform—to train the child to be a good citizen of the school community, and to prepare him, as fully as possible, for the wider society into which he will enter on leaving school, and as a member of which he will have to live. Both aspects of education for citizenship are neglected in most schools, to a greater or less extent. Most frequently they are left to chance; school authorities throw the boys together, and hope that the give-and-take of community life will by itself provide the necessary training in the difficult art of living in a community. Provided the school in a place where the children live a happy community life under the best possible conditions, and not a mere examination factory, much valuable training in citizenship will be imparted in this informal way. Still there is need for definite foresight and planning to make the community life of the school as effective as possible; and there is a still greater need for this community education in citizenship to be supplemented by the provision of well-designed theoretical and practical courses in citizenship. By the time the child leaves school he should have been given a realistic preview of the adult world in which he is to live, a clear understanding of his basic rights and duties as a citizen of it, and some practice, however elementary, in the exercise of elementary civic responsibilities. Schools must cease to be ivory towers, isolated from the life of the community; they must realise that they are an integral part of the community, and that their *raison d'être* is not only to develop the individual to his maximum capacity, but to socialise him so that he will use his talents and abilities in the service of his community, his country and the whole world.



Education for citizenship in a school should not, however, be identified with a course of civics for, to quote Sir Richard Livingstone, "it is a far cry from Civics to Citizenship." "Citizenship," Sir Richard continues, "is not information or intellectual formation, though these are parts of it, it is conduct not theory, action not knowledge, and a man may be familiar with the content of every book on the social sciences without being a good citizen." A mere theoretical knowledge of his rights and duties as a citizen will not therefore, of itself and by itself, make the pupil a good citizen. This knowledge has to be put to practical use, and linked with the student's life and experience before it is likely to inspire him and become part of the texture of his being. Hence by means of environmental studies of local community problems, visits to the Legislature, Corporation, and other community agencies that make community possible, by planned experiments in pupil government, by organising the curricular and co-curricular life of the school in such a manner as to provide real experiences in democratic living, theoretical knowledge must be brought to life, living and learning fused, and the child given a real understanding of democracy in action and his part in its functioning. Such an approach to citizenship education will be both progressive and practical, since it will not only teach the future citizens what they ought to know, but what they can do, and what they ought to do and how best to do it. Indeed, in the last analysis, the best way children can learn democracy is by living it, hence the school should provide every opportunity to enable them to acquire an experienced understanding of the responsibilities and joys of democratic citizenship. The school, a community institution, as John Dewey stated, should be a purified, simplified and balanced epitome of the society outside its walls in order that it may prepare its students for life in that society. Every school, as far as is feasible, should be a democracy in miniature, giving the children as large a share in the management of their own affairs as they are capable of shouldering.

"Citizenship", once again to quote Sir Richard Livingstone, "is practical not speculative, active not passive, an art not a theory, the art and virtue of living in a community. Social

value is learnt by social life". And this social life in a school must be organised on democratic foundations and provide ample scope for the development of democratic wisdom, attitudes, skills and values. It is folly to imagine that children reared on rigid authoritarian lines will automatically be transformed into active, self-determining, responsible democratic citizens when freed from the "prison house" of the school. Only a democratic education can hope to produce democratic citizens.

The methods used in education for citizenship are perhaps of greater importance than the curriculum. First-hand observation and experience is the best approach, supplemented by debates and discussions on civics and current affairs, talks by prominent civic officials such as the Mayor, the Judge, the Deputy Commissioner etc., and the use of modern audio-visual techniques such as Wall charts, Film strips, the Radio and the Cinema, which have made it possible to make education for citizenship much more interesting and dynamic.

The tone, atmosphere, organisation and discipline of the school also have a large part to play in educating pupils for democratic citizenship. They must be such as to develop in students democratic qualities and attitudes, such as self-control, tolerance, mutual goodwill, willingness to give and take, the ability to put "principle" above personalities, and to be loyal to institutions rather than persons, and to encourage freedom of thought, consideration for others, and participation in common programmes.

Two vitally important principles must be emphasised before we end. Every effort should be made to guide, inspire and help the child to develop into an active, responsible citizen, but there must be no forcing or regimentation. There can be no hard and fast type of ideal citizen in our rapidly changing world, hence any attempt at regimentation or typing is bound to fail, for it will be tantamount to preparing the child for the world of to-day instead of the world of tomorrow.

And, finally, the education of the whole man must not be sacrificed in our zeal to produce the ideal citizen for the whole is more than the part. Education for good citizenship is of very special and vital importance in a young, newly liberated

and developing country such as ours, for, according to Sir Richard Livingstone, "the spirit (of good citizenship) is the blood in a country's veins; where it is pure, and flows strongly, national life will be healthy and vigorous, where it is thin or tainted, anaemia will be present and may pass into death".

## XIX

### EDUCATION FOR NATIONAL INTEGRATION

"AMONG the major tasks before us," stated the late Sri Lal Bahadur Sastri in one of his first broadcasts to the nation, after the mantle of the late Jawaharlal Nehru had fallen on his dependable shoulders, "none is of greater importance to our strength and stability than the task of building up the unity and solidarity of our people. Our country has often stood like a solid rock in the face of a common danger, and there is a deep underlying unity which runs like a golden thread through all our seeming diversity.

But we cannot take our national unity and solidarity for granted or afford to be complacent, for there have been occasions when unfortunate and disturbing divisions, some of them accompanied by violence, have appeared in our society."

It is not surprising that our late Prime Minister should have deliberately chosen to focus the nation's attention on a need which is not only inherent in the Indian situation itself, but one which is, perhaps, both from a long and short-term point of view, the need of the hour. One of the most disturbing features in post-Independence India has been that society has grown more hierarchical and stratified, that the gulf between the rich and the poor, the educated elite and the ignorant masses, has grown wider, and that dangerous fissiparous tendencies like linguism, regionalism, casteism, etc. of various kinds have reared their ugly heads and have threatened, and are still threatening to destroy that deep awareness, in theory and still more in practice, of the unity and solidarity of India which is essential if our newly-won freedom is to be preserved and strengthened, and if the nation is to progress towards its proposed goal of a Welfare State founded on a socialistic pattern of economy and true equality of opportunity for all.

No one saw more clearly, and believed more passionately in the need to combat unceasingly and relentlessly the centrifugal forces that are endangering the national unity and



solidarity of the country than our first beloved Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. To this all-important objective he devoted his life, and, with this end in view, he summoned in 1961 a historic Conference of politicians of all shades of political opinion, and leaders of thought from a variety of fields, to explore ways and means of achieving true and enduring, emotional and national integration. This Conference, *inter alia*, brought widely to the notice of the nation that education was the principal key to the solution of this vexed problem, for, properly planned and oriented, it could provide the greatest cohesive force in the country.

The reverse side of the coin also becomes apparent, for it was realised that, instead of promoting social and national integration and nurturing national consciousness, education could also encourage and aggravate existing divisive tendencies by increasing the gap between the rich and the poor, and the educated elite and the illiterate masses, and by segregating different communities, castes and religious groups in different schools and educating them in isolation with one another.

With a view to remedying existing deficiencies and to making concrete suggestions how education, especially at the school and College levels, can contribute most effectively to the promotion of emotional and national integration a small expert Committee was appointed, under Dr. Sampurnanand, with the following terms of reference:

(i) To study the role of education in strengthening and promoting the process of emotional integration in national life, and to examine the operation of tendencies which come in the way of this development.

(ii) In the light of such study to advise on positive educational programmes for youth in general and students in schools and Colleges in particular to strengthen in them the processes of emotional integration.

This Committee, after touring the country and sounding the opinion of leaders in all walks of life, issued at first an Interim Report, later a main Report in which it made far-reaching and detailed suggestions for promoting emotional and national integration through a reorientation of the education imparted in the nation's schools and Colleges.

The various long-term and short-term suggestions made in

the Report of the Committee on Emotional Integration, which have been endorsed and extended by the Kothari Commission, will be dealt with later in this chapter. Before this is done, however, it is necessary to probe a little more deeply into the matrix in which the need for emotional and national integration was born and from which any real solution must be forthcoming. Failing this, any attempt to promote educational and national integration and unity in the country will take place in a vacuum and will inevitably fail to achieve its objective.

It is true, as Sri Shastri stated, that "a deep underlying of unity runs like a golden thread through all our seeming diversity." Yet the diversity is a real and inescapable fact in that "unity in diversity" which is the hallmark of our national identity, character and culture pattern. "India", says the Kothari Commission, "is a land of diversities, of different castes, peoples, communities, languages, religions and cultures. These diverse, and often conflicting elements have through the centuries impeded the growth of social cohesion and of emotional and national integration and of national consciousness." Indian culture, if the term can be used, is a "unity in diversity", but the average man is more conscious of religious, caste, linguistic or communal loyalties and of religious or regional cultural affiliations than of the totality of Indian culture.

In such a setting it would be idle to dream of achieving social, national and emotional integration by attempting to iron out all differences of race, religion and culture in the country, either by persuasion or by force. Every group and sub-culture, major and minor, has contributed its mite or its abundance to the rich vitality and variety of life and culture in India; they must continue to feel, not only that they are free to coexist and to enter into creative and mutually beneficial relationship with all other groups and sub-cultures, but also to make as distinctive and creative a contribution to the vitality and richness of Indian life and culture in the future as they have made in the past. Minority cultures, especially, must not merely be tolerated, they must be respected and made to feel that they have a special and unique contribution to make to the unity in diversity of Indian life and culture.

"The long history of India seems to prove conclusively", states Prof. Humayun Kabir, "that, on the one hand, the diversities can never be fully suppressed, and, on the other, that India has prospered whenever those diversities have been recognised and accommodated in a large setting. Today in a democratic setting the recognition and regard for diversity is even more important, and can supply the basis for India's greatest contribution to the world." Positively, then, any attempt at education for emotional and national integration must recognise the complex structure of Indian life and culture, and the need to preserve and encourage equally the multiple and variegated elements that make up the rich mosaic of Indian life and culture.

Negatively, all divisive and fissiparous tendencies such as communalism, casteism and linguism, and subversive ideologies and creeds which undermine patriotism and national unity and solidarity, should be resisted by every possible means. Centrifugal forces of every shape and character must be counteracted and repressed, and centripetal ones encouraged.

Better, more comprehensive, and functional education, in the widest sense of the term, from birth to death is the best and most enduring means of promoting emotional and national integration in the country. Such integration is not merely an intellectual concept, it is rather a state of mind and of heart, and a way of life.

Indeed emotional and national integration could only really be said to be achieved when every Indian is himself an embodiment of the underlying unity in diversity of the country, and when he is so emotionally and morally involved with it that he is ready to sacrifice everything, even his life, for its preservation and enrichment.

"Social and national integration", says the Kothari Commission, "is a major problem that will have to be tackled at many points, one of which is education". The warning is a timely one, for the problem will never be solved unless all the educative agencies and forces in the country, the home, the school, institutions of further education, the mass communication media—the Cinema, the Press, the Radio—and, last but not least, the precept and example which the older

generation sets before the rising generation, are harnessed to this supremely worthwhile objective.

In the course of this chapter we shall touch on the important role of the home, of the mass media of communication, and of the words and example of our elders and betters in promoting education for emotional and national integration. But our main concern will be with the role which the schools, through a positive long-term and short-term programme of disseminating information and providing suitable activities and experiences, can and must play to promote emotional and mental integration among their pupils, for, according to the Kothari Commission, "education can and should play a very significant part."

The child's first and most lasting education is given in the home; it is in the family that he acquires his first, strongest and most enduring impressions, convictions, attitudes and values. Hence on parents devolves the major responsibility, while preserving and cherishing their own beliefs and sub-cultures, to make their children realise the essential unity of Indian life and culture and the importance of not disparaging, or developing a superiority complex and/or a feeling of hostility towards the beliefs and customs of children and adults belonging to castes, creeds or communities other than their own. It is in the family that the young child must be taught, by word and example, love for his motherland, to regard all Indians as his brothers linked with him in a common heritage and common destiny, and to understand and respect views, social customs and habits, languages and religious and cultural beliefs different from his own, and those of his own community and social set. The child who in the home learns to live in an atmosphere of unity, mutual regard and friendship with children and adults of other castes, creeds and communities will have acquired the essential foundation on which his future education for emotional and national integration can be based.

It is on such a solid foundation that the good school should have to build. In case, however, the foundation does not exist, or has been undermined by bigotry and intolerance, the school will have to strive all the harder to make good the deficiency.



In its task of promoting emotional and national integration the first objective of every school in India, an objective that must be consciously planned for and consistently pursued, should not only be to inculcate love and loyalty of the motherland in all its students, but to educate them, irrespective of caste, creed or community, to be good Indians first and good Bengalis or Punjabis, Hindus, Muslims, Parsis or Christians, second. "The growing generations", says Prof. Kabir, "must be trained to be Indians who accept their total heritage." In order to be in a position to inculcate this pan-Indian outlook in their students, certain preconditions will have to be fulfilled in all schools and educational institutions.

For a start, admissions to schools, Colleges and other educational institutions should not be made on a communal, religious, linguistic, monetary or caste basis, but strictly on the basis of merit and need. Secondly, all schools should be encouraged, and, in the last resort, compelled to admit students of all castes, creeds and communities, and Government recognition should not be given to institutions of a narrowly communal character, or where divisive tendencies are encouraged. Thirdly, freeships and scholarships should be awarded principally on the basis of means and merit, and domiciliary restrictions in regard to migration of students between one State and the other should be removed. Finally, every thing possible should be done to encourage children in every school to mingle freely together, and to explore and discuss their different backgrounds and sub-cultures with a view to finding out those things which they have in common rather than the differences between them. This will enable them to understand and appreciate that the common factors that bind them together are stronger and more important than those which separate them, and that even though a child may, and indeed should, hold fast to his beliefs and customs, loyalties and values, he should also learn to appreciate and respect those of his friends and companions.

From the academic point of view, the main instrument for providing education for emotional and national integration in schools is what is broadly termed, the curriculum, the totality of subjects and experiences provided both inside and

outside the classroom which are specially designed to promote the all-round development of the students, physical, intellectual, emotional, mental and spiritual.

Language, linked as it is with one's innermost thoughts and feelings, can be a great unifier or a great divider. In a multilingual country like India, with fourteen major languages and hundreds of dialects, linguistic exclusiveness or fanaticism is perhaps the chief and most explosive obstacle to emotional and national integration. We cannot hope to understand, appreciate and love our fellow Indians, if we cannot communicate with them in their language or they cannot communicate with us. Or, worse still, if we regard our own mother tongue as *the* language of India, *par excellence*, and all others as inferior languages. The learning of more than one language is inescapable in India if we are to make contact with the minds and hearts of the minority of our countrymen, and an essential means towards the promotion of emotional and national integration. It is obviously impossible for the average child or adult to learn all the major languages in India. But it is necessary that all students should learn, besides their mother tongue, the regional language, (if this differs from the mother tongue), and the two important link languages—Hindi which is to be the official *lingua franca* after 1965, and English which is to remain an associate official language, and which still remains, as it did in our struggle for freedom, the main bond of unity between educated people all over India, a key to Western literature and Science and our chief window on the outside world. Hence the Three-Language Formula which has been accepted by all the States, and endorsed with certain modifications by the Kothari Commission, should be effectively implemented along the sensible lines advocated by the Commission.

If this formula, however, is to become an educational reality, limited utilitarian objectives will have to be defined and techniques devised by which the second and third languages in every State can be effectively taught and learnt with the minimum of time and effort. At present, even where these languages are being honestly taught, due to over-ambitious objectives and poor techniques, a disproportionate amount of time and energy is being devoted to the task, the

school curriculum and timetable are overloaded with languages, and the results achieved are not only poor but totally incommensurate with the time and effort expended by both teachers and students.

The Three-Language Formula, sensibly and effectively implemented, can and should form the core of a curriculum reoriented to promote emotional and national integration in students. Other subjects in the curriculum such as Philosophy, Literature, Geography, History, Social Studies or Civics, and Art and Crafts, Music and Dance can also be effectively utilised to promote a deep understanding of and a revaluation of Indian culture in the light of modern needs and compulsions. Geography can make students aware of the unity of India as a human and geographical entity, and by stress on the striking post-Independence developments in the country, like the new Steel towns, industries and multipurpose projects, which will give them a legitimate sense of pride in their country. The study of History can, and should give students a deep understanding of the historical unity of the country, despite stresses and strains, and an awareness and conviction that disunity and Balkanisation have been the principal enemies of India in the past, for these have been and continue to be an invitation and ally to foreigners to invade or to attempt to invade the country and place it under subjugation. To be effective instruments for the promotion of emotional and national integration, History books used in schools should be purged of excessive pro or anti Hindu or Muslim or Christian or British bias. They should be written by teams of scholars, with different bases and backgrounds, and should stress the indispensable contribution made by different religious and cultural groups, indigenous and foreign, to the rich unity in diversity of Indian life and culture. Geography, Social Studies and Civics can do much to promote in theory and practice good Indian citizenship, and the rich heritage of India in the fine arts, music, dancing and drama and painting can forge unseen but enduring emotional bonds between students of different communities, castes and creeds.

Co-curricular activities can also be effectively utilised to promote social, emotional and national integration. In

this connection, the following recommendations of the Emotional Integration Committee are of interest.

1. A common uniform should be introduced in all the schools in the country.
  2. There should be a daily ten minute talk in Second Assembly specifically designed to promote emotional and national integration, and the National Anthem should be sung daily.
  3. Terminal gatherings should be held twice a year in which students should take a pledge to devote themselves to the service of the country.
  4. Open air dramas written to serve the same objectives should be encouraged.
  5. Student exchanges and tours should be a regular feature of the school programme.
  6. The Youth Hostel movement needs to be taken seriously. Youth Hostels should be set up by all States in select places.
- Inter-State Camps and Youth Festivals of drama dance and music, Inter-State athletic and games competitions, Inter-State Social Service camps, the N.C.C. and A.C.C., the Boy Scouts and Girl Guide movements, the celebration of National Festivals and birthdays of great men are other means of promoting emotional and national integration through extra-class activities.

The attitudes and values of the teachers, and methods they use, will play an important, perhaps a decisive role in a programme of education for emotional and national integration. Teachers should be pan-Indian in outlook and free from narrow sectarian, communal or linguistic bias. They should not only impart knowledge but inculcate behaviour and activity patterns, and encourage their pupils to think for themselves and not to be slaves to every passing wind of passion or prejudice.

Finally, the entire tone and atmosphere of the school should be such as to foster emotional and social integration between its pupils and its teachers and between parents and guardians. Integration, as we have mentioned earlier, is primarily a state of mind and heart and a way of life which is caught rather than taught, and learnt from living rather than from books. A healthy community life, and a family atmos-



phere in which students and teachers, irrespective of caste, creed or community freely mingle, and to which each can make his unique contribution, is the best education for emotional and national integration that any school can give.

The Kothari Commission, emphasising that the promotion of social and national integration must be one of the major objectives of education at all stages in India, has not only endorsed and underlined all the means outlined above for achieving this desirable end, but put forward two even more radical ones.

The first of these is that there should be built up in the country as soon as possible a Common Public School system, on the broad lines prevailing in the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A., in which children of all castes, creeds and communities, irrespective of the social or economic status of their parents, should be admitted free of charge and solely on the basis of the locality in which they live. This may appear to be a rather Utopian ideal in the present climate of opinion in India, but, if it can be achieved, there is no doubt it will be a powerful force in the promotion of social and national integration.

The second radical proposal of the Commission, to deepen the sense of national consciousness and promote integration, is that social and national service and work experience should be made an integral part of the general and technical education of all Indian children at all stages. This step the Commission is convinced would, *inter alia*, do much to break down barriers between the rich and the poor, the educated elite and the masses, the white-collar workers and those who work with their hands, and thus promote social and national integration.

The home and the school can achieve much in educating the growing child and adolescent towards emotional and national integration. But their best efforts in this direction will be undone, or rendered nugatory if, as we stated at the beginning of this chapter, other important community agencies, (such as the Church or Temple or Mosque), or the mass communication media (as the Press the Radio), and the thoughts, words and actions of adults, and especially of those adults who are looked up to for leadership by the young, (parents,

teachers, politicians, authors, scientists etc.) are at variance with the patterns of behaviour, beliefs and values of the schools and the home. All these agencies must not only be in rapport with but actively co-operate with the home and school to promote emotional and national integration among the youth of the country. Finally, the State must strive to bring about, as soon as possible, economic equality and social cohesion among all classes of people in India by creating a sense of confidence in the Nation's future, by promoting liberty, equality and justice, by raising the standards of living and reducing disparities in wealth and culture, by removing inequalities among boys and girls, men and women, and eradication of caste, communal, religious and other divisive factors which at present stand in the way of the achievement of a true sense of emotional and national integration among all sections of the people. The State must also, through the efficient mass communication media which the modern State commands, foster among its subjects a deep sense of national consciousness of the values and obligations of citizenship in free India, teaching them to identify themselves not with sectional loyalties but the nation as a whole, and fostering in them respect and understanding for the culture, traditions and ways of life of different sections of the nation.

Social, emotional and national integration, in short, has a varied content, economic, social, cultural and political, but these different facets are interconnected. Hence progress towards this goal, as we have stressed before, must be attempted on many fronts, and promoted by many agencies, working together rather than at cross purposes, if it is to be achieved. And achieved it must be, however long and arduous may be the task and the endeavour, for its speedy and effective consummation is vital for the creation of a stable and united country, and of a strong, driving faith in the glorious future towards which we aspire.

## XX

### EDUCATION FOR INTERNATIONAL UNDERSTANDING

WORLD unity is not merely desirable, it is absolutely essential if the world is to survive. Towards this ideal, advances have been made on many fronts. Economically the world is already one; the economic unit is no longer an individual country, or even a group of countries, but the whole world, for trade and commerce know no Iron or Bamboo Curtain. The advances of science, the development of communications and the conquest of the air have brought the nations closer together, and knit them in close and complex relations with one another. Culturally, too, the World State is much nearer. UNO, UNESCO and the spate of international organizations covering every field of human endeavour, which are attempting to extend, consolidate, and make a constructive use of the geographic, economic and cultural unity that already exists, and to conquer obstacles that still stand in the way of a fuller realisation of the ideal, are an eloquent testimony that enlightened men and women in all countries are thinking along similar lines, and moving towards a common solution of the ills of the present-day world.

But in spite of the progress that has been made economically, strategically and culturally, and the existence and achievements of the UNO and its satellite organisations, the World State has not arrived politically and psychologically. Indeed the gap between the peoples of the world seems today even

greater than it was at the end of the 1914-18 War, because there seems no common ground between the two major rival ideologies of Communism and Democracy which are engaged in a ceaseless cold war for political, economic, cultural and spiritual leadership in the civilized world. This is not surprising. The World State will only be born when the peoples of the world are intellectually, morally and spiritually ready to receive it and all that it implies. World unity on the political and psychological plane can only be the fruit of true understanding between nations and peoples, a realisation that, despite difference, all men are brothers—children of a common Father, and heirs to a common inheritance.

Some form of 'world consciousness' born of true understanding is an essential prerequisite for world unity. No mere stroke of the politician's pen or blueprint of an international organisation, however perfect, can bring it about. It is a task for education in the widest sense. Education for international understanding is the straight and narrow path that will lead to lasting world solidarity, unity and peace.

When ideas crystallise into a word, a phrase, or a slogan there is grave danger because it prevents clear thinking about them. The phrase 'Education for International Understanding' has been so much bandied about that it is difficult to realise what it really connotes.

Understanding may mean friendship—perhaps the deepest understanding is only born of true friendship—but there can be understanding without friendship. Nor does understanding imply complete agreement with another's point of view; it may, on the contrary, mean agreeing to differ, but such differences of opinion need not destroy true understanding. The Commonwealth countries frequently fail to see eye to eye with one another, yet this is not an indication of weakness or lack of understanding; rather the right to disagree, which the individual countries of the Commonwealth possess and frequently use, is a sign of strength and of their underlying unity. True understanding consists in the ability to put ourselves in the



place of another and to see things from his point of view, and in respect for our opponent's integrity and worth, even while we disagree with his opinions and views. Such understanding can only be born of the realisation that as long as men are human they will differ and disagree, but that these differences are relatively unimportant compared to the things all men have in common. Such true understanding between the peoples of different races, cultures and philosophical attitudes will not be easy to realise, which makes it all the more worth achieving. Achieving it will be a slow and painful process; it is fundamentally a task for the educators, not for the politicians or economists who are helpless till the soil has been prepared in the hearts and minds of men and women all over the world.—'Wars are born in the minds of men, hence it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be built up'.

The minds and hearts of men, it is apparent even to the superficial observer, are not yet ready for international understanding, and the solidarity, peace and friendship that will be born of that understanding. Numerous barriers still exist to prevent such understanding which must be broken down before the ground will be ready to receive the seeds of such understanding, peace and solidarity. Such barriers are of all types—physical, racial, political, economic, educational, psychological, moral and spiritual.

Communication by land, sea and air has spanned the world, but it is still too expensive for the man in the street, and customs and currency restrictions and immigration laws are further hindrances to free intercourse between people. Racial prejudices and the deep cleavage between Black and White, East and West are as strong and potentially explosive as ever despite the fact that, as a recent UNESCO pamphlet has pointed out, the consensus of world scientific opinion is convinced that there is no evidence that any human group is innately superior to any other group in personality, character or intelligence. 'The myth of race', adds the pamphlet 'has created an enormous amount of social and human damage. It still prevents the normal development of human beings and deprives civilization of the effective co-operation of civilized minds; it is, also still one of the main causes of fear,

hostility and hatred in the world and a potential cause of War.' Economic nationalism and restrictive tariffs prevent the free flow of international trade, and cut-throat competition for the world's dwindling markets and raw materials frequently sets nations at one another's throats.

In the sphere of education itself faulty approaches lead to a warped and narrow education that tends to isolate one country from another, and, by emphasising differences rather than similarities between peoples, makes the child a potential Jingo, suspicious of and hostile to other races. The manner in which several subjects are taught is largely to blame for this bigotry, especially the teaching of History and Geography. The teaching of Geography in most countries tends to emphasise the exotic differences rather than the underlying similarity of human life and endeavour all over the world and the mutual dependence of one country on another, while that of History tends to be narrowly nationalist and militarist, a paean of victory over other nations, a record of enmity and war rather than an account of the economic, social and cultural progress of the world to which all nations have contributed and an account of the inspiring lives and work of great heroes of peace who have contributed to the culture and heritage of the world. It is right that every nation should teach loyalty and patriotism, there should be no need to do this at the expense of other nations; children can and should be taught to be proud of their own culture and heritage, without despising those of other countries. Among the main psychological barriers to world unity are frustration and fear, born of ignorance, selfishness and hostility, which, sooner or later, lead to aggressiveness and war.

Finally, there is the almost insurmountable political barrier to international solidarity which is generally summed up in the term 'Nationalism'. Nationalism, as R.H.S. Crossman pointed out in an article on 'Nationalism and the Modern World', is not necessarily reactionary or inherently evil; 'it is in its best form a necessary and creative concomitant of real political liberty' and 'an essential stage in the self-assertion and emancipation of man'. There is no opposition between a sane and healthy nationalism and a genuinely international outlook; indeed the latter must be founded upon and grow

out of the former. One must be a good and loyal citizen of his country before aspiring to be a citizen of the world; world unity cannot be created, by ironing out all national differences, for in order to have strength, richness and vitality any projected world unity must be a 'unity in diversity'. There is no doubt, however, that nationalism in its extreme form, which makes each nation a law unto itself, free to pursue its own selfish ends unrestrained by any power or authority higher than itself, excessive nationalism that leads to isolationism and chauvinism is one of the greatest obstacles to world unity and peace in our day. A nation has been cynically defined as "a body bound together by a common error as to its origin and a common aversion to its neighbours"—it is because these prejudices still persist, with tragic intensity and explosive force, that there is the ever-present threat of a third World War, and international understanding, solidarity and peace seem to be an unattainable and impossible ideal.

Yet a desperate effort must be made to attain this seemingly impossible ideal, it is not only peace that is at stake but the very survival of human civilization and culture. There must be a revolutionary change of heart and mind in individuals and in nations which, to be permanent, can only be produced by a system of education, or re-education, specifically planned and directed towards this end.

Educationists all over the world have not been slow to measure up to the magnitude of the problem and to attempt a solution. Some Universities and a few special institutions in progressive countries, have started courses in international relations with a view to bridging existing cultural barriers between nations, and to achieve, if possible, a new synthesis between the parallel cultures of the East and the West. Rabindranath Tagore's Visva Bharati at Santiniketan and the International People's College, Elsinore, both started about 1921, were far in advance of world opinion in this matter, and truly pioneer ventures in an uncharted sea.

UNESCO is a symbol and hope of such efforts, and is making a heroic attempt to unify the world culturally and to place the cultural standards of backward nations on a par with those of the culturally advanced. There has been a wel-

come exchange of teachers and students between various countries, and International Schools and Colleges, and world-wide organisations such as the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, the Y.M.C.A. the Rotary International, the Ford and Rockefeller and Carnegie Foundations and various other similar agencies, government and private, have attempted to bring the people and culture of one country into living contact with the people and culture of others.

These and similar schemes for international co-operation and exchange have done, and are doing, much towards making those who come into contact with them think and feel internationally, and in helping them to understand and appreciate the life, outlook and culture and manners of other people different from themselves. But, they have only touched the fringe of the problem. They have helped to bring into existence in each country a small creative minority pledged to the cause of promoting international understanding and peace, but have met with little appreciable success in their attempt to leaven the vast, uncreative mass of their fellow citizens whose mental and cultural horizon frequently fails to extend beyond their village, town or state, let alone their country.

Leaven can only work its miracle in dough after that dough has been well prepared through intensive pounding and kneading to receive it. Similarly the soil has to be prepared in the hearts and minds of the children at schools before the seeds planted in them by the internationalists can grow and yield their fruit. In its total implications, education for international understanding is too complex a subject for schools to tackle successfully, but they can at least make a beginning. They can do much to create the right attitude in their pupils, negatively by destroying existing barriers to understanding between nations and peoples, and positively by inculcating the virtues of tolerance, broad-mindedness, truth and charity, and an awareness of the spiritual equality and brotherhood of men which are indispensable for such understanding.

Any attempt at education for international understanding in the present school set-up in most countries will require a reorientation of outlook and objectives, a re-interpretation of the subject matter and teaching approach to certain subjects,



and a greater emphasis on certain aspects of these subjects which have been largely ignored or glossed over in the past, and the soft-peddalling of others.

There must be a reorientation of objectives. It is proper that education should emphasise the greatness of the culture of one's own nation; it should also emphasise that other nations have contributed their quota to that culture, and, above all, that the great and enduring ideas and ideals of all time are the common heritage of all mankind. An ideal of service to their country should be kept before the students' minds, but the wider prospect of service to humanity should not be lost sight of. Differences that distinguish one people from another may be dealt with, but it should be continually emphasised that the similarities that unite men and women all over the world are deeper and more fundamental than the differences that divide them. Above all, the virtues of tolerance, understanding and charity should be developed by emphasising the common humanity and brotherhood of the peoples of the world, who are all children of a common Father and heirs of a common inheritance.

Many of these objectives can be, wholly or partially, attained by a re-interpretation of the present curriculum and a new approach to the subjects which comprise it, with emphasis on their international as well as national character and content. The humanities will form the core of any curriculum aiming at promoting international understanding, studied as a record of the ideas and ideals of the great thinkers and men of all ages and all countries who have helped to build up the common pool of culture, experience and wisdom from which all the nations of the world have drunk freely. The character and individuality of nations and peoples are best mirrored in their languages and literatures, their arts and architecture, their political and social institutions, and their religious beliefs and values; hence the study of these should figure prominently in any curriculum for education for international understanding. Such studies should help the students, vicariously, to make living contact with the peoples and cultures of all nations through which they can arrive at a true understanding of their strengths and weaknesses and of their kinship with them.

Literature which should, where possible, include both national and world literatures, should be studied not as an 'essay in criticism' or as a compendium of grammar, vocabulary and syntax, but as the living record of human lives, motives, thoughts and ideals. Languages, if taught, should be treated primarily as a means of communicating one's ideas to others, for ignorance of foreign languages is one of the chief barriers to the free commerce of ideas and ideals between the people of one country to another. National history should not be taught in isolation but in contact with the history of other countries, and against the background of World history; it should be freed from its present narrow, excessively nationalist bias and taught in an international setting as the record of the interaction of nation on nation and people on people, sometimes for evil, more often for good. To accomplish this end, the main stress in history teaching must be shifted from political and military history to social and cultural history, and the primary emphasis should be placed on the heroes of peace who contributed to the cultural heritage of man, rather than on the heroes of war who frequently did their best, consciously and unconsciously, to destroy that precious heritage.

Civics should stress man's duty not only to his country but to humanity as a whole, and economics should be taught in a world setting. The sciences may be used to illustrate the obvious truth that every progress and advance in civilization is the product of international co-operation and is a joint responsibility, while the Arts and Crafts which are a part of man's common heritage provide a first-rate illustration of the fact that, however much men may differ in their thought and ideas, in their feelings and emotions, they are one.

Perhaps the most important subject for promoting international understanding is Geography, provided it is approached in the right way. If it is to be a help in the promotion of international understanding, Geography should be approached not primarily as a science, but as an art. Man must be its central study and, while pointing out differences in manners, customs and dress and character between the peoples of the world, it should continually emphasise that 'differences' of

culture are not due to fundamental innate differences between various peoples, but mainly to the influence of the geographical and social milieu in which they live. Last but not least, religious and moral teaching should stress the brotherhood of man under the Fatherhood of God, and underline the common ethical code of the principal religions of the world which all preach charity, tolerance and understanding in one's relations with all men, not merely those of one's own village, town or country.

Such an education, by cutting across barriers of caste, creed, colour and nationalism, and by dissipating error and ignorance, will do much to create the attitude and outlook that makes for true understanding and the readiness to follow the lead of those who see deeper and further into this vital matter than the man in the street. Education for international understanding, planned along these lines, will do much in the schools to lay the foundations of world unity, peace and brotherhood.

Other means must be used to break down barriers for which the school is not responsible and which it can do little to surmount. Obstacles such as false propaganda and censorship which hinder the free flow of the truth, and others which prevent free intercourse between the peoples of various countries should be removed as soon as possible. Travel should be made cheaper, and currency restrictions and immigration laws relaxed. International conferences should bring peoples in all walks of life from all over the world together, and World Jamborees, International Youth Camps and Work Camps etc., should bring the children and the youth of various countries together at a time when their attitudes to life and people are in either formative stage. Every country should have one or more institutions of the type of the International People's College, Elsinore, or Visva Bharati, and governments should select and give foreign students financial help to attend them, on the condition that when they return home they become interpreters of the country visited to their own people, and not keep the vital knowledge and understanding they have acquired to themselves.

Teacher exchange is one of the best means of facilitating the growth of international understanding, for one teacher

can carry the culture, ideals and atmosphere of his country into an entire village or urban community. In this connection, the author vividly remembers the true story narrated to him of a coloured American elementary teacher who crossed over to England on the Teacher Exchange Scheme whose presence was at first resented in the Village school where she was sent, but who, before the first term was out, was the most popular person in the village which she cured completely of its blind colour prejudice. Contacts such as these, both casual and temporary and systematic and prolonged, not between cynical and blasé politicians and government officials, but between the ordinary men and women of various countries, which give them the opportunity to work, study, and live side by side for even a short while they can do more to produce international understanding than any number of books, lectures or conferences on the subject. The author is convinced that if the ordinary people in every country could meet, mix freely and get to understand and know one another, there would be no wars and world unity would be brought much nearer.

Education for international understanding is among the most critical challenges of our time. It is on the manner in which the educationists of all countries meet this challenge that the future peace, progress, culture and happiness of the world, perhaps its survival, will depend. It is about time that schools, colleges and other educational institutions in India began to take a more active interest in this neglected but vitally important aspect of education. We can do no less who had the world's greatest living internationalist as our first Prime Minister.



## XXI

### PLANNING AN IDEAL CURRICULUM

THE overall objective in education is, as we have stated before, to draw out and develop all the many-sided potentialities of the child, physical, emotional, mental and spiritual in a socialised milieu in order to equip him to adjust himself satisfactorily to the world in which he is living today, and in which he will live tomorrow, and to endow him with the power to shape both these worlds, wherever necessary, nearer to his heart's desire. The import and quality of the education provided to achieve this end is a function of many variables. The most important of these are, the personality and skill of the teachers, the needs and capacities of the child at different stages of his development, the effectiveness of the teaching methods, the quality of the school tone and discipline, and last but not least, the nature, content, scope, and quality of the curriculum.

Of these educative factors in a child's life, not the least important is the curriculum, interpreting the word in its widest significance. Indeed, it is perhaps on this factor, more than any other, that the average teacher depends in his effort to develop and shape the growing personality of the child, and to equip him with the knowledge, skills, understandings, attitudes and values that will serve as a basis for that effective action, both now and hereafter, that will be the acid test of his education.

When behaviour is most truly human, a man acts not merely with his body, his mind or his spirit but with body-mind-spirit; he reacts not with a part of himself, though one aspect or the other may be prominent at the moment, but with his total personality. The primary and most difficult task of education, according to Prof. Ralph Borsoi, is to humanise humanity. "This fact," he adds, "must dominate considerations of the content of education, it must dominate our consideration of the organisation of the curriculum. The curriculum organisation which educates a part of the

man only, however effectively, is not a partial but a total failure."

A curriculum is therefore a means to an end, it must aim to educate and humanise the whole man, and in schools must aim at developing the integrated personality of the child in all its manifold aspects. A truly functional curriculum should endeavour therefore, as far as is practicable, to bring about, what Prof. Jacks, calls the "total education" of the individual, rather than to develop the different aspects of his personality in isolation from one another.

This was and is the main defect of the old "mental discipline" curriculum, based on the discredited "faculty psychology"—that it endeavoured by each of its components to train specific mental faculties in isolation. These faculties or factors of the mind, as they are now termed, cannot however be so isolated and trained; they form integral and organic parts of the unity of the mind, they act and react on one another and are linked not only with each other in clusters, and with the working of the mind as a whole, but also with the functioning of the body and the nervous system, the emotions, and the shaping of the human spirit.

Francis Bacon took "all knowledge as his province." To attempt such a feat with even one branch of knowledge has in the face of the relatively rapid accumulation of knowledge in all fields after the Renaissance, become extremely different, and in view of the "knowledge explosion" of today is impossible. As knowledge grew, it came to be analysed and to be grouped under certain broad "Subject" headings, which, in turn, were divided and sub-divided. This fragmentation of knowledge was reflected in the schools, where the curriculum came to be thought of as a number of more or less distinct, self-contained, discrete and unrelated 'subjects', isolated and insulated from one another, each with its corpus of subject matter, neatly parcelled out and labelled into topics and sub-topics. During the 19th and early 20th centuries this Subject-dominated curriculum grew rapidly by accretion. New subjects constantly clamoured for admission, till the average curriculum of a school became not only overloaded, but began to resemble a crazy quilt.

Two results, both tragic, followed. Seeing the futility of try-

ing to teach less and less about more and more, educationists abandoned the idea of a "general education" and tended to concentrate on teaching more and more about less and less. Premature and excessive specialisation descended like a blight on schools all over the world, gradually stifling the old idea of a "liberal education", and even so-called educated people seldom had the opportunity of perceiving the unity and wholeness of knowledge, or of developing the capacity "to see life steadily and see it whole." The atomisation of knowledge, which accompanied excessive specialisation, and the rigid subject division also produced an atomisation of the student and resulted in an unbalanced and lopsided development of his total human personality. The greater grew the specialist, the less grew the man.

Our present subject-centred and compartmentalised curriculum, then, bears little functional relationship to the ultimate end of education to produce a complete, many-sided and integrated personality and prepare the children for the world in which they live today and in which they will be living tomorrow. The rigid subject division neither represents the way children and adults usually learn, nor does it prepare for effective living. Living consists of whole experiences, in which information, skills, attitudes and values act and interact and are brought into play simultaneously; and true learning consists of "gestalts", or significant patterns rather than disconnected bits of information. This analysis and classification of the totality of human knowledge into subjects is logical and convenient, but no cut and dried or rigid separation is possible between these interconnected and overlapping subject-areas of knowledge whose boundaries meet and merge at so many points so that no real barriers are possible between them. Moreover the concept of the curriculum in the 20th century has been widened to include the totality of activities and experiences, consciously provided inside and outside the class-room, designed to shape the character and develop the many-sided personality of the child. Hence the modern curriculum is more than a patchwork collection of syllabuses and subjects to develop the child's mental abilities; it includes these, plus participation in a wide and growing variety of co-curricular activities to deve-

lop the intellectual, emotional and volitional aspects of his character and personality.

A compartmentalised, patchwork subject-curriculum plus a few extra curricular 'frills', still all too common in India, tends to produce a patchwork personality and to widen the gap between the school curriculum and life, between the subjects taught in school from textbooks and the natural and social environment, instead of promoting correlation and integration between the two. Progressive educationists have not been slow to perceive the dichotomy; hence there has been marked tendency in recent years to try and break down the artificial barriers between subjects and parts of subjects, and between 'curricular' and "extra curricular" activities and experiences, and we can discern a movement towards synthesis as a counterbalance to the passion for analysis which produced the present patchwork, ill-balanced, non-integrated and excessively subject-centred, rather than life-centred curriculum.

This contemporary movement towards the increased correlation and synthesis of the subject matter of the various subject fields takes two related forms—Correlation and Integration. The advocates of Correlation endeavour to weave together into meaningful units or centres of interest the parts of a subject or of the different subjects; for the present compartmentalised curriculum and distinct watertight fields of knowledge, they are endeavouring to substitute a number of simple unities and broad fields of knowledge, experience and activity. Thus, English, instead of being split up into spelling, writing, composition, grammar and reading, each of which has a specific place on the Time-Table, is considered as a whole, a collection of information, skills, attitudes and interests that can be better taught "of a piece" than separately to promote the main objective of English teaching as a communication art and skill. This is correlation in its simplest form.

Other protagonists of correlation go further and link the teaching of various related subjects together. Thus history, geography and civics are fused in "Social Studies", or the teaching of science is linked with mathematics and technical studies. The permutations and combinations are numerous; the overriding aim being to emphasise the interrelatedness of



the various subject fields and the relative impossibility of studying them in isolation from one another. Correlation was one of the underlying principles of the scheme of Basic education first sketched by Mahatma Gandhi and elaborated by the Zakir Hussain Committee. The Basic Education Curriculum aimed at breaking down existing subject barriers, and correlating the teaching of all subjects at first with productive crafts, later with the natural and social environment of the child, hence correlation was the keynote of both the curriculum and methodology in schools. This newer and more vital approach to the traditional curriculum of the advocates of Basic education has been extended, enriched and reinterpreted in broader and more modern terms by the Secondary Education Commission and still more recently and fully by the Kothari Commission. A detailed analysis of the progressive recommendations of this Commission regarding the reform of the school curriculum in India will follow later in this chapter. All we need at this stage is that the principle of correlation, broadly interpreted, is a keynote of the Kothari Commission's recommendation of the school curriculum.

Correlation places stress on subjects considered as complete wholes, or on larger areas of human knowledge, and tries to establish points of contrast between these subjects and real life. Integrationists are more thoroughgoing; they start with the child's interests or problems, and aim, more directly at solving the latter, and developing the child as a complete personality and establishing a functional relationship between learning in the school and learning and experience outside it. The apostles of the integrated curriculum regard the various subjects as "members" of the curriculum "body", and endeavour to relate them organically to one another and to the whole. They discount for the most part, the rigid compartmentalized subject-centred curriculum; to them the curriculum is an interrelated pattern of information, skills, attitudes and interests which they strive to organize round a series of "centres of interest", "units of experience" or projects—broad problems which have to be solved in their natural setting if possible. Such "projects", they hold, give interest, meaning and purpose to education, and represent the way children actually learn; they create the desire for learning

and self-expression which leads to a more rapid and permanent acquisition on the part of the children of the requisite knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to solve the problems under consideration. Formal lessons, exercises and drills in the fundamental skills involved in the 3R's are not forgotten, except by the extreme apostles of integration, but they are reduced to a minimum and given mainly in response to a felt need and an express desire on the part of the pupils.

Integrationists place their main stress, not on the amount of knowledge the pupils acquire, but on the way they acquire it and the manner in which they attack the problems posed to them. The teacher's role, according to them, is not to hand out predigested facts to his pupils or to be a Sergeant Major, drilling them ad nauseam in the 3R's, but to stimulate his students into greater self-activity, and to act as guide, philosopher and friend in helping them to solve their problems and to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to do so successfully. Hence in the approach of the Integrationists, subjects and facts tend to be replaced by activities and experiences, and the old formal methods are replaced by learning by doing; and, instead of 'teaching' his pupils in the narrow sense, the teacher shows them how to teach themselves. This active, problem-solving approach, it is claimed, produces initiative and interest and active enquiring minds rather than passive, stuffed ones; it also makes a successful integration of the subject matter and skills involved in the various subjects possible, so that facts become faculty, and the experiences and activities shape the attitudes and values of the student and develop his total personality.

This is true to some extent. But integration will not take place of itself, it must be consciously striven after; besides the 'problem' or project approach very often not only leaves significant gaps in the pupil's knowledge, but often results in an incomplete mastery of the tools of learning which are essential means to his later education. Further, 'subjects' represent the accumulated wisdom of the past and each generation must transmit this heritage to the next. The solution to this vexed problem of a more functional curriculum would therefore appear to lie in the direction of making it a judicious blend of the old subject and the new "problem solving"

approach, of facts and of activities and experiences. The fundamental tools of learning must be mastered and essential facts assimilated, for these are the foundations of learning and the cornerstone of the mental health and growth of the child. But these facts and tools should be taught in as interesting and enlightened a manner as possible, drill should be at a minimum, and the excessive isolation of the parts of these subjects abolished. There should be a "Core Curriculum" consisting of essential skills and knowledge, in which rigid standards and individual mastery by the best possible modern methods must be striven after; for the rest the Curriculum may be tackled as by correlating the individual subjects into larger wholes. The basic common idea underlying the approach of the correlationists and integrationists is to make the curriculum more integrated, more functional and more closely related to life.

The need to make the curriculum life-centred rather than subject-centred or book-centred also finds expression in another trend in modern curriculum planning—the need to relate the curriculum at all levels to the needs of society and the needs of the nation, to use it as a means to produce the type of person necessary to man the ideal society aimed at. This school of thought thinks that the choice and content of school subjects should be such as to impart knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that will be useful in the students' life and work on leaving school, rather than such are designed to develop individuality or personality, or which are of purely cultural value in the common sense of the word. Hence the growing stress on subjects like environmental studies, social studies, the sciences and technical subjects, work experience in its many shapes and forms, and on social service activities and experiences that will be of practical and immediate value to the students on leaving school and help to promote social and national integration. This utilitarian and pragmatic approach to the curriculum, which is very obvious in countries like the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A., has been strongly advocated by the Kothari Commission for India.

A careful and detailed study of the views of the Kothari Commission on the nature and content of the school curriculum, as it is and as it should be, will be very profitable at this stage.

The Commission begins by noting that the school curriculum is in a state of flux all over the world, and by emphasising that the traditional curriculum of schools in India is in need of radical changes on three counts. Firstly, it is totally inadequate due to the knowledge explosion in the modern world, and the startling fact that doubling period of the over-all quantum of knowledge in the world, which was 150 years in the 19th and early 20th centuries, is now ten years. Secondly, syllabuses in the traditional subjects of the school curriculum were so full of dead wood that the new knowledge that was rapidly becoming available found it almost impossible to find a place in it, and in the craze for premature specialisation the ideal of a general education was being lost sight of.

"Against the background of the startling curriculum developments that are taking place abroad," says the Commission, "the school curriculum in India will be found to be narrowly received and largely out-of-date. Education is a threefold process, of imparting knowledge, developing skills, and inculcating proper attitudes and values. Our schools are mostly concerned with the first part, the imparting of knowledge, and carry out even this in an unsatisfactory way. The curriculum places a premium on bookish knowledge and rote learning, and makes inadequate provision for practical activities, and education is dominated by examinations, external and internal. Moreover, the development of useful skills and the inculcation of the right kind of interests, attitudes and values are not given sufficient emphasis, the curriculum becomes not only out of step with modern knowledge but also out of tune with the life of the people."

Having thus analysed the weaknesses of the traditional curriculum, in broadly similar terms to the Mudaliar Commission which stated "the school curriculum was narrowly conceived and out of tune with life and the real world for which the school was preparing its students", the Kothari Commission goes on to prescribe the remedies and to describe the ideal curriculum for schools in India during the second half of the 20th century.

Defining the curriculum as "the totality of learning experiences that the school provides for the pupils through all the manifold activities of the school in the classroom and outside



that are carried on under its supervision", the Commission proceeds to postulate that a complete, up-to-date, comprehensive and balanced curriculum, to be in tune with the modern world and the new India, must contain four essential elements—Literacy, Numeracy, Work experience and Social and national service.

In spelling out the objectives, the content and scope of these four basic elements of the curriculum, the Commission again and again stresses the functional relationship that must exist between the school curriculum and the life and work that await students when they will leave school to enter the work-a-day world. The curriculum must be both child-centred, (though it should be a continuous progress of studies, yet it should have different specific elements to meet the different stages of growth of the child)—and life centred, preparing the child to be a good citizen and a productive member of society. When it proceeds to details, however, the life-centred objective of the curriculum tends to dominate, indeed almost to obsess the thinking of the Commission where the school curriculum is concerned. Hence the Commission stresses that the content of the syllabuses and the various activities designed to impart even literacy and numeracy should be life and work centred, and it proceeds to add that in addition to literacy and numeracy, through a carefully planned programme of Work experience from the K. G. to Class X, at first in the school and later taking the form of productive work in the homes, factories or farms, and through an allied programme of social and national service, every child in school must be prepared to be a productive member of society on leaving school.

Traditional educationists in India are inclined to cavil, and perhaps not entirely without cause, at the pragmatic and somewhat materialistic concept of the curriculum outlined by the Kothari Commission, and to criticise it as being inimical to true culture and alien to the ideal of a liberal education. This point of view was strongly criticised as being unrealistic and shortsighted by Mr. Chester Bowles, U.S. Ambassador to India, in a recent convocation address at Calcutta University, "A curriculum", said Mr. Bowles, "which emphasises the physical and social sciences and the

teaching of industrial skills and attitudes is sometimes falsely described as materialistic. In my view nothing could be less materialistic than an educational system formally designed as a means of raising human beings out of mud and squalor and backbreaking toil in which millions of men are now submerged."

It is quite true that, to put it crudely, bread comes before culture; still, it must never be forgotten that man does not live by bread alone. A truly functional and balanced curriculum will cater for these twin basic human needs, it will help a man both to earn a good living and to lead a good life, and, above all, while making a man a productive member of the society in which he lives, it will never lose sight of the vital fact that in a democracy such as ours the individual is not a mere creature of the State or society, but a unique, inalienable personality in his own right whose total and many-sided development must always be a primary objective of the curriculum.

## XXII

### BASIC EDUCATION: ACTIVITY EDUCATION AND WORK EXPERIENCE

IN the field of education, as in other spheres of human endeavour, there is a well-marked, almost inevitable rhythm of development. When a new and stimulating idea or method is born, under the first flush of enthusiasm, the upward curve of progress is rapid. But soon the first, fine, careless rapture spends itself, and what psychologists term a 'plateau' is reached when the idea, as it were, marks time, till it receives fresh inspiration and a fresh impetus to commence a second upward surge, or it begins to lose its vital force, stagnates and dies.

Basic education, as the report of the Assessment Committee on Basic Education made clear, has for years been in the plateau stage of its development. The crucial question therefore was: Would it succeed in getting out of the doldrums to start on a new era of progress, or would it stagnate and die? This was one of the many thorny dilemmas facing the Kothari Commission when it began its monumental work in 1964.

There is grave danger when new and vital ideas and movements crystallize into a series of formulae, and even graver danger when these formulae get confused with related formulae in the same field. This danger was ever present in the case of many of the formulae coined by the orthodox exponents of Basic education, as they were always being confused with those coined by the exponents of 'Activity education'. This confusion between Activity education and Basic education needs to be cleared up, before passing on to the new concept of Work Experience.

That there is an intimate relationship between Basic education and Activity education is abundantly clear. But there still appears to be a good deal of confused thinking about the exact nature and scope of this relationship. Many of its enthusiasts, for instance, appear to hold that Basic educa-

tion is an almost entirely novel and revolutionary idea. They claim that while it obviously owes something to the Activity education movement, it is a wider, richer and more significant idea than the latter—a complete and integrated whole, of which the latter is only a part. The issue is further confused by the tendency on the part of such enthusiasts to draw a distinction between “productive activity” and “creative activity”, to make something of a fetish of the former, and to claim that productive activity rather than creative activity is fundamental to Basic education. Finally, there is a tendency to exalt Activity education over other types of education, Basic education over all other forms of Activity education, and to claim that Basic education is the only possible type of education for all time, for all children and adolescents in India.

There is more than a grain of truth in these claims, but it is mixed with a good deal of misguided thinking. The discerning well-wisher of Basic education, therefore, must endeavour to separate the wheat from the chaff so that the tender shoots of Basic education may take firm root and yield abundant fruit. To do this it is necessary to put Basic education in its correct historical setting, to determine its relationship with Activity education, and to see both Basic education and Activity education in true perspective with regard to other types of education, before examining the relationship of both these concepts of education with the novel concept of Work Experience.

Historically, till the beginning of the twentieth century education was almost completely identified with instruction in the 3R's. As a consequence it was excessively bookish and academic, an almost completely passive process on the learner's part, the child being treated as a pitcher into which the teacher poured ‘gallons of imperial facts’! At the beginning of this century, however, there was a considerable reaction against this narrow view of education. Initiated by famous educationists such as Froebel, Herbart, Montessori, Decroly and Kerschensteiner, the modern reaction against this conception of learning reached its climax and found its most persuasive exponent in the American philosopher-educationist, the late John Dewey. Dewey reacted violently against the



orthodox view of education current in his youth; he preached, in season and out of season, that a man or a child does not learn exclusively with his mind or with his body, but with his body-mind; that book-learning is only a part—perhaps not the most important part—of education; and that the learning process must cater for the whole child and not merely his mind. In contrast to passive rote-learning, Dewey emphasised learning from experience and activity, he was convinced that children, like adults, learnt best from experience, by action upon and within their environment, by study from real life as well as from books. Education, he said, was a process of living, and not merely a preparation for future living. The ideal school was a simplified, purified and balanced epitome of the life outside its walls, providing the children with real-life situations and experience through which they could educate themselves. The cumulative effect of Dewey's revolutionary teaching was to shift the main emphasis from the subject to the child, from memorising to problem-solving, from drill to creative and constructive activity, from books to learning by doing, from the memorisation of facts to learning from experience and activity.

Dewey, and other pragmatic philosophers such as William James, provided the somewhat dubious philosophical basis of Activity education. Support for this change of emphasis from passive to active learning soon came from teachers and psychologists all over the world, who began to teach that Activity schooling was an essential part of the education of all children; that it was possibly the best form of education for the majority of children, and perhaps the only effective method of education for dull and backward ones. Entering the schools, the Activity education movement took various forms, (the best-known among them being the Project method perfected by Kilpatrick, a follower of Dewey, and the Dalton, Winnetka and Gary plans in the United States), and led to the introduction of "centres of interest" or "activity methods" in progressive schools all over the world. Finally, in our country, Mahatma Gandhi devised a peculiarly Indian variation of Activity education in his blue-print for Nai Talim or Basic education. Basic education, therefore, in historical perspective is best conceived of, not as a new and revolutionary

type of education, but as a species of Activity education, which has taken, and continues to take, many different forms all over the world, and which is no longer considered revolutionary, but is accepted as 'respectable' in the most orthodox educational circles.

That Activity education, and our own variation on the theme, Basic education, have much to offer to a progressive theory and practice of education in all types of school goes without saying. What is still a matter of considerable dispute, however, is the exact nature and scope of its actual or potential contribution. Are Activity and Basic education the best, nay the only possible form of education for all children in India, as is claimed by the distinguished authors of the Assessment Committee in their Report? Or have these indubitably worth-while forms of education a more limited validity, and a less universal applicability? Only a fairly detailed analysis of the true character and scope of Activity education will suggest lines along which a definitive answer to this question may be attempted.

To begin with, Activity education is not, as is commonly believed, the latest fad in the educational field, an experiment that has yet to justify itself. Learning by doing, by activity and experience, is the first and the most natural form of learning; its introduction or rather re-introduction into the schools is not an innovation; it is a revival of a method of learning that not only comes naturally to every child but is as old and respectable as man himself. And since its revival in the United States and in Europe, and in our country also, there have accumulated the results of an imposing array of experiments that more than justify its retention and its extension in the schools of today and tomorrow.

Having assumed this, we must enter certain important caveats. First, Activity education is no panacea, no royal road to learning. Nor is it the only possible form of education for all children in all times and places, because children differ considerably in age, ability and aptitudes, and need a variety of educational approaches if each child is to be fully educated. Further, Activity education is no substitute for book-learning, but an invaluable supplement to it. It cannot provide a child or a youth with all the skills and knowledge

he needs, but it will make him aware of his need for them, stimulate his interests, unlock his energies, and create a favourable attitude towards book-learning. Hence in any balanced scheme for the education of a child, both Activity education and education from books must play a part, and the Basic school can no more do without good textbooks and a well-stocked library than the traditional school can do without crafts and other creative activities.

A second point to be kept in mind is that not all activities and experiences are educationally worth-while, or, to put it differently, not all activities and experiences are equally worth-while and educative. Our time at school is limited, hence a careful choice of the most worth-while and educative activities has to be made if the precious time at our disposal is not to be wasted. Further, the activities and experiences provided in school should not be merely physical. The gospel of dirty hands and of physical activity for its own sake can be carried too far. A provocative book or lesson can be a stimulating and active intellectual experience, whereas some types of craft or handwork, such as raffia-work or basketry can be mentally deadening.

It is in the light of the above considerations that the controversy of "productive activity versus creative activity" must be assessed. The *sine qua non* of the activities of Basic education is that they should be educative, and to be truly educative they must be essentially creative. They may also be productive, but if this productive element is given too much importance, it is more than likely that the creative element will be pushed more and more into the background, and will soon cease to exist.

The pundits of Basic education appear to hold a contrary view. Criticizing the Basic schools in a certain State, the Assessment Committee stated: "In one State 'productivity' is rejected in favour of creativity leading to little production and equally little creation." The Committee went on to claim that productive work, being absolutely essential, should be concentrated on even if much production involved little or no creative work. This appears to be putting the cart before the horse, and making a part more important than the whole. Creative activity, rightly interpreted, is educationally a more

comprehensive and dynamic concept than productive activity. It may include productive activity, but if one has to choose, (as is essential at the junior Basic stage, for psychologically the child of 6-11 years of age needs creative activity that seldom results in much productive value), an educationist must surely choose to concentrate on creative rather than productive activity. Too great an emphasis on the latter may result in an unintelligent and anti-intellectual type of education. That this danger is very real is shown by the experience of a writer in Teacher Education who reported as follows:

"We recently visited at a Basic Training College an impressive exhibition of handicrafts in pottery, wood and paint. We picked out a number of striking and original pieces and inquired who designed them. In every case it turned out that the piece had been designed by the prospective teacher (that is to say, the Training College student) who had made it.

"This should have far-reaching results", we said. "teachers trained in this way will presumably realize the values of this sort of freedom and may be expected to provide similar opportunities to their own students later on".

"Not at all," came the reply. "The prospective teacher is encouraged to do his own designing so that later on he can make good designs for his future classes. All the school students will then make that product at the same time under the direction of the teacher."

Further inquiry elicited only one reason for this uniform practice: the conviction that materials ought not to be wasted. The argument ran like this: only a few students would be capable of choosing or designing their own projects; the rest would turn out something ugly or useless, an outcome to be contemplated with horror. Need we say more?

Finally we come to the view that Activity education, and its Indian variant Basic education, is the best, nay the only form of education for all children at all times in all places, and that the sooner it displaces traditional forms of education in all schools the better, for non-Basic schools are held to be an unmitigated evil. That this is an obviously exaggerated point of view will become clear by a further consideration of some of the assumptions on which it is based.

Activity-centred education (and Basic education), which



started as a violent protest against traditional 'passive forms of learning' and subject-centred education, is based, *inter alia*, on the following assumptions: that when pupils listen to a teacher giving a lesson or when they read from a textbook, nothing goes on in their minds; that when their bodies are active, their minds are always active; that facts are nothing but dead lumber in the mind; that the traditional subjects have no virtue in them; and that book-learning is a waste of time and effort, and should be forthwith replaced by learning by doing, by activity and experience.

All these assumptions are of doubtful validity, at best mere half-truths, and all the more dangerous because of that.

A child listening to a stimulating lesson or reading a thought-provoking book may be physically passive, but his mind and imagination may be as active as his body is passive; while, on the contrary, the child who is actively engaged in spinning thread on a takli or making a basket or digging in the garden may be mentally dead.

Further, facts are not always 'inert-facts'; they can be, and are, the raw material of creative thought, and without a rich and varied assortment of facts of all types it would be impossible to think, or even to act, creatively or constructively for any length of time. Subjects also are not an unmitigated, nor even a necessary evil; they are bodies of distilled and organized facts, skills and attitudes which it is essential for an educated man to assimilate, for they represent man's cultural heritage which it is the duty of every generation to assimilate, add to, and transmit to succeeding generations. It is, therefore, an essential function of schools to preserve, enrich and transmit this heritage.

Finally, while Activity methods can stimulate interest and lead to the acquisition of various types of knowledge and skills, such knowledge and skills must, sooner or later, be systematised and organised, and this is probably best and most economically done through the ordinary, so-called 'formal class lessons' which the exponents of Activity and Basic education disparage and seek to banish from the classroom. Further, the mastery of the fundamental knowledge and skills required for life in the world today cannot all be acquired incidentally or in correlation with crafts and other

activities; there is, therefore, a definite need for formal lessons, even routine drill, before adequate mastery is obtained. Finally, it must be pointed out that no method or methods, however perfect they may be, will in themselves automatically accomplish miracles in the schools; what is all-important is not the method, but the ability of the teachers who use the method, and experience has clearly proved that only the above-average teacher can make a real success of Activity or of Basic education.

Apart from the practical difficulties outlined above, however, an even more fundamental weakness in Basic education, as it was conceived in orthodox circles and that began to be more and more apparent after Independence and especially in the last fifteen years, was the intimate relationship of Basic education with rural education, with the rural environment, and the static, village societies which Gandhiji tended to idealise and sought to uplift. With the rapid industrialisation of the country, which has gathered tremendous momentum as a result of the first three Five Year Plans, it has become increasingly obvious that to spread the traditionally conceived Basic education in the New India, in the grip of an industrial technological and sociological revolution that aims to project her from the bullock-cart age to the Space age, would be like attempting to use cowdung to provide fuel for Nuclear Reactors! That there is much that is intrinsically valuable and worth-while in Basic education goes without saying, that it needed to be more liberally interpreted and adapted to the changed, and rapidly changing India of today and tomorrow was equally obvious.

The main deficiency in the Indian educational set-up, which Basic education sought to remove, was the yawning gap between education and life, which alienated the products of the schools from their homes and communities and made them misfits in their own society. Basic education endeavoured to furnish, through its emphasis on craft-based education and the linking of the class-room with the natural and social environment of the child, a corrective to the excessively academic nature of formal education. All countries, as the Kothari Commission points out, have attempted in recent years to establish close links between education and life and

to make it less bookish and artificial through introducing into the school curriculum, crafts, or manual training, or what in the U.S.S.R. is called Work Experience. "In our country", says the Commission, "a revolutionary experiment was launched by Gandhiji in the form of Basic Education. The concept of Work Experience is essentially similar. It may be described as a re-definition of his educational thinking in a society launched on the road to industrialisation."

In such a society, the Commission holds education must become an instrument to increase national productivity "so that an expansion of education leads to an increase in national income which, in turn, may provide the means for a larger investment in education. Education and productivity can thus constitute a rising spiral whose different parts sustain and support one another."

If education is to be geared to national productivity, the Commission emphasises it must be science and technology based, increasingly vocationalised at the secondary and higher levels, and include Work experience as an integral part of both general and technical education. An all-round and purposeful education for every Indian boy and girl, the Commission is convinced, must in the future consist not only of literacy and numeracy, but of active participation in social and national service and in properly planned programmes of Work Experience which the Commission defines as "participation in any productive work in home, school, farm or factory". Such Work experience will include the best features of Basic education, reinterpreted and adapted to meet contemporary realities and compulsions, and carry them to their logical conclusion, in view of which fact the Commission suggests that the controversial term "Basic education", (which arouses strong emotions both in its supporters and its detractors!), should be discreetly dropped from current and future educational terminology or jargon!

A comprehensive programme of Work experience, starting with simple handiwork and training in manual skills in the pre-primary and primary classes, leading up to pre-vocational training in well-equipped School workshops and Experimental farms, and culminating in actual experience in factories and farms has been drawn up by the Commission. At the

secondary level, the Commission insists, such Work experience should not be of a dilettante type but should help the student to earn by it, in cash or kind, part of the expenses of his education thus reaffirming not only the psychological but also the productive aspect of Basic education.

Many of the advantages which the proponents of Activity education and Basic education claimed would flow from their adoption are also claimed for Work Experience.

The introduction of Work Experience as an integral part of the education of all children will, it is claimed, lessen the distance between manual and intellectual labour and bring persons whose work involves predominantly one or the other activity closer together. It will thus act as a corrective to the excessively academic nature of formal education, and not alienate children, especially rural and working-class children, from their families, communities and the actual environment in which they live. Work experience will thus integrate education and work, make entry into work after leaving school easier, and contribute to national productivity. Finally, it is claimed, Work experience will help to reduce the gap between the educated elite and the masses, and thus be a potent instrument in promoting social and national integration.

There is little doubt that the advantages claimed by the Kothari Commission for Work experience, just as those claimed by their protagonists for Activity Education and Basic Education, are, in theory, indisputable and unexceptionable. Whether these theoretical advantages will be realised in practice will depend largely upon how effectively the plan for the introduction of Work Experience into the present curriculum is actually implemented. For in this matter, as in so many others in life and education, the proof of the pudding is in the eating thereof!



## XXIII

### A FUNCTIONAL SOCIAL SERVICE PROGRAMME IN SCHOOLS

"THE supreme end of the educative process", stated the Mudaliar Commission (1954), "should be the training of the character and personality of students in such a way that they will be able to realise their full potentialities and contribute to the well-being of the community". And this Commission proceeded to suggest that this end should be attained "through activities which promote the formation of character and inculcate ideals which make for personal integrity and social efficiency," among which activities various forms of social services were given an honourable mention.

This was a step in the right direction. But the Mudaliar Commission did not go far enough, or probe deeply enough into the many-sided implication of its proposal regarding the utility and utilisation of various forms of social service as character-forming activities. In fact the impression wittingly or unwittingly given was that while such activities were valuable, yet they were but one of many possible means of influencing the values and attitude of students and shaping their character and personality, and that they were desirable but not absolutely essential. This somewhat halting and half-hearted approach was primarily responsible for the fact that this particular recommendation of the Secondary Education Commission had a lukewarm reception and failed to produce either enthusiasm or tangible results in the vast majority of Indian schools.

The National Education Commission, aware of these limitations and deficiencies in the approach and follow-up of the recommendations of the previous Commission concerning the introduction of social service activities in schools devoted considerably more thought to this vitally important issue, and arrived at the unanimous conclusion that "some form of national and social service should be made obligatory for all students and should form an integral part

of education at all stages. This can become an instrument to build character, improve discipline, inculcate a faith in the dignity of manual labour and develop a sense of social responsibility."

This viewpoint represents a new departure and a new outlook to that put forward by the Mudaliar Commission. Instead of being an 'extra curricular' fringe activity, social and national service is conceived of as an essential and integral part of the education and training of all students at every stage of their education, and instead of being voluntary it is to be henceforth a compulsory part of the education of all students in all institutions in India. Indeed in its effort to draw up a blueprint for an ideal type of education suited to our day and age, the Commission has given equal importance to social and national service, alongside literacy, numeracy and work experience, as one of the four essential and interrelated elements in a comprehensive scheme of general education that will equip all Indian boys and girls for the India of today and tomorrow.

Confronted as we are with a steadily widening gap between the Haves and the Have-Nots, between the educated elite and the uneducated masses, between the ruling minority, employed largely in White-Collar jobs and the vast majority who work with their hands, either in Industry or as hewers of wood and drawers of water, and engulfed in a nation-wide wave of student indiscipline and violence that, in the final analysis, has its roots in quantitative and qualitative weaknesses in the education imparted to our youth, few educationists, Heads or teachers can doubt that the country needs a new pattern of education. Such an education will not only bridge existing disparities but also impart a new sense of direction and dynamism to India's youth, and inspire them to put service of others, and especially of their less privileged fellows, before egoistic self-seeking and harness their energies and enthusiasms to constructive and nation-building activities instead of to senseless violence and destruction. In this context the rationale of social and national service as an integral compulsory element in the education of all Indian students at all stages is self evident.

The theoretical basis and justification of making social and

national service an integral part of the general education of all Indian boys and girls in all types of educational institutions is, therefore, unexceptionable. But when it comes to giving this worthy ideal a local habitation and a name, and to devising a well-planned, workable programme of social service activities which can be incorporated into the curriculum of the average school in India, serious difficulties and obstacles are bound to crop up which may result either in the attempt being abandoned, or in the dilution of the ideal to such an extent that it will fail to generate real enthusiasm among students and teachers, or to achieve all that is expected from it. The Commission is only too well aware that "it is no easy task to organise an effective programme of social service in all secondary schools in the country". Hence it suggests that its implementation should be carried out in stages, and that to give an impetus to this new movement, selected schools of good quality should pioneer it, the fruits of their experience being extended to other schools in ever-widening circles till it covers every school in the country.

When the above action-research programme is put into operation, a great responsibility will devolve on those schools which are selected to pioneer this worthwhile experiment. They will have to plan the entire operation carefully, implement it with zeal, care and circumspection, and carry out a continuous process of self-evaluation in order to assess the success of their endeavours, and to diagnose deficiencies, either in planning or in execution, with a view to remedying them before they undermine and destroy the effectiveness of any particular part of the programme, or of the programme as a whole.

An endeavour will now be made to suggest certain guidelines and practical measures that the author hopes will help pioneering School authorities to plan, implement and critically assess, a workable and effective programme of social and national service activities and experiences in their respective schools.

Since such a programme embodies a relatively new and disturbing idea in the context of the traditional life and curriculum of the average school, the Head, (actively supported by his Managing Committee), should with his entire staff

make a careful study of the stated objectives as well as of the practical recommendations of the Commission regarding the introduction of social service in schools so that they may realise quite clearly what is the main objective of this recommendation and be convinced of its importance and utility. For unless the entire staff, or at least the majority, are convinced that this particular recommendation of the Education Commission is of vital importance, and are enthusiastic about its implementation, very little will be accomplished. Once conviction and enthusiasm have been generated among the Head and staff, it should be radiated by them to the students and accepted by them as an intrinsically worthwhile programme. Head, staff and selected representatives from the pupils should now get together to draw up a practical, workable and effective programme of social service for the school.

This programme may be drawn up in various ways. The Class may be taken as the unit for certain types of social service activities, such as keeping the class-rooms and corridors clean, decorating them, polishing the furniture and painting the doors and windows. Prizes may be offered for the best kept class-room on a weekly or monthly basis, and appropriate deterrents decided upon for ill-kept class rooms. For larger activities, such as levelling the playground or maintaining a school garden, if a House system exists, the House may be the unit, and every House given a specific job to carry out every term or year. Points may be given on a House basis as are given in many schools for studies, games, athletics, debating, dramatics etc. and the competitive House spirit canalised to making the social service programme really tick. For still more ambitious activities, the entire school may be the unit. Thus a school for relatively well-to-do children may "adopt" a similar type of school for less fortunate children, and collect money, clothes, books and other school necessities to help the poorer students in the adopted school, or a school may 'adopt' an Old People's Home or Children's Hospital, and not merely gather money to provide the children or old people with sweets and other necessities, but also entertain them with regular programmes of music, singing and dancing.



Whether Social service activities are organised on a Class, House or School basis, due care must be exercised so that every activity is carefully planned and carried out so as to achieve its maximum utility and to ensure that as many teachers and students as possible actively participate in each activity; for if only one or two teachers and a handful of students take part in such activities, the purposes of the Commission will be largely defeated. Hence maximum participation on the part of students and teachers and optimum utilisation of such activities to yield the greatest fruit should be the keynote of each and every item of the Social Service programme of the school, and of the programme as a whole.

A built-in scheme for continuous evaluation should be an essential part of the Social service programme. At the end of each term or year there should be a critical review of every activity, and of the entire programme, and whatever does not measure up to the above criteria should be modified or scrapped and new activities substituted. It is inevitable that, from time to time, activities that are at first popular and fruitful will languish or outlive their usefulness. Such activities should be rejuvenated or scrapped by the school. The total curriculum proposed by the Commission, of which social service is to be an integral part, is too full and crowded, and time is too limited and precious for any dead wood to be tolerated on sentimental or traditional grounds.

If the Social service programme of schools is to be an integral part of the total school curriculum, it will be essential for this programme to find a specific place in the regular weekly Timetables. This will ensure that all students and teachers participate in it, and make them realise that Social service is as much a curricular activity as mathematics, or literature, or physical training. Schools should set aside one afternoon of the six-day week they will have to introduce if they are to do justice to all the Commission's recommendations for social service and other co-curricular activities recommended by the Commission which could be carried out in alternative weeks. Since a change is as good as a rest, such activities will help to reduce the fatigue and burden of the six-day-week and the longer school day, and provide a welcome relief from more traditional class-room activities.

In addition to what may be termed the individual, 'in service' programme of social service of a school touched upon above, the Commission has also suggested a more ambitious 'extension-service' programme designed to involve schools in local or State-wide programmes of Community Development. The modus operandi of such programmes will be the organisation of regular Labour or Social Service Camps of ten days' duration for students and teachers of different schools during which they will take up and execute specific Community Development projects such as building a road or digging a well or helping with the adult literacy campaign. These camps will have to be carefully organised on a district or statewide basis, and schools given a specific programme to carry out under skilled supervision if they are to be really successful. A special Agency will have to be set up to assist schools to make a real success of such labour or Social Service camps and to co-ordinate the activities of different schools so as to complete the large-scale projects envisaged by the Commission.

India is at present facing a crisis of character stemming mainly from the fact that the majority of its people, especially among the educated elite, are consciously or unconsciously living according to a philosophy of "each man for himself, and the Devil take the hindmost", and the future appears to be dim indeed, unless the youth of today, who will be the citizens of tomorrow, can be fired with a more wholesome ideal of Service-before-self and a positive realisation of the brotherhood of men. "If" says Mr. Prem Kirpal, Secretary of the Union Ministry of Education in a recent article on 'Student Unrest', 'an underdeveloped country like India is to grow and take its rightful place in the comity of nations, and, if the difficult problems of defence, poverty, food and self-sufficiency are to be tackled successfully, it is necessary that its leadership, derived largely from the rising generation receiving higher education, should not only have the essential knowledge and skills needed for modern society, but should also be strongly imbued with a sense of social responsibility, an intense faith and confidence in the future of their country, and a deep commitment to national development.' This is the objective, the *raison d'être* and the justification

for the inclusion by the Commission of its novel and forward-looking recommendation that social and national service should be an integral part of every student's general education, at all stages, throughout India.

## XXIV

### THE PLAY-WAY IN EDUCATION

THE late G.B.S. dreamed of an ideal world in which "work is play and play is life, three in one and one in three." The actual work-a-day world of the school, alas, appears to be very remote from this dream world. Indeed in the drab, narrow, bookish and hothouse world of the average school, work and play were, till comparatively recently, regarded to be antithetical. Within its confines Work was regarded as the be-all-and-end-all of life, and play, at first severely frowned upon, was later only grudgingly permitted outside the class-room as an "extra curricular" activity, after the serious business of the day in the class-room had been transacted! And within the four walls of the class-room the teacher kept his captive audience chained to their books and slates, his spoken or unspoken motto being that of the celebrated Mr. Dooley "It don't matter what you learn a child, so long as the little blighter don't like it". Spartan bodily and mental discipline was the order of the day, reflected in the harsh discipline, the rigid teaching methods, the drab textbooks, the crude system of rewards and punishments, and the cheerless atmosphere of the average school.

This sorry state of affairs, which made children "creep like snails unwillingly to school" and long for the day when they could shake its dust from their feet prevailed, with a few happy exceptions, till the beginning of the 20th century. But as the "Century of the Child" dawned and the inspiration derived from the lives and teachings of Pestalozzi, Rousseau, Froebel, Montessori and the MacMillan Sisters, (to name but a few of the great Child Educators of the 18th and 19th centuries), began to act, a breath of fresh air began to blow at first through the class-rooms of young children, and later the entire school, all over the world.

Mr. Caldwell Cook summed up this new spirit and outlook in the title of his stimulating book *The Playway in Education*. In this provocative book, Mr. Cook gave enthusiastic expres-



sion to this new spirit and embodied it in class-room methods techniques that were easily understandable and utilisable by the average teacher. The 20th century researches and writings of psychologists like Piaget, Susan Isaacs and Gesell, of philosophers and educationists like Dewey and Kilpatrick in the U.S.A., of Nunn and Whitehead in England and of Tagore in our own country lent a great impetus to the new movement, and today in progressive schools all over the world, the psychological and educational value of play, and play-way methods and techniques, is widely acknowledged, in theory, if not always in practice.

That the vital importance and significance of play in the education of the child has been in our day universally recognised is not surprising. What is surprising is that it should have taken psychologists and educationists so long to accord due recognition to a biological urge, an instinct or a need, (call it what we will), which is as basic, not only to young children but even to adults, as breathing, eating, sleeping, associating with one's fellows and learning.

Man, according to Prof. Huizinga in his carefully documented study "Homo Ludens", is not only Homo Sapiens, (Man, the Thinker), and Homo Faber (Man the Maker), but also Homo Ludens (Man the Player). In his love of play, man is akin to the animals, and play itself appears to antedate man. Further play, both in animals and man, is more than a physical phenomenon or a psychological reflex, it has real significance and utility, biological, psychological, educational and cultural, for the growing child and man.

Biological play has dual and apparently contradictory functions, on the one hand, play provides a release and is a safety valve for superfluous energy, it helps us to relax after a hard day's work and to re-create our flagging energies and spirits and to provide the psychological equivalent to a 'second wind' for further work. On the other hand play, especially in infancy, is subconsciously a preparation for the serious business of life, for, in and through play, young children try out and develop powers, abilities and energies that will be useful to them in later life. Hence the epigram of Prof. Karl Groos, "We do not play because we are young, but are young in order to play."

Psychologically, play is a spontaneous and creative activity which, absorbing the player utterly and intensively, provides its own justification and is an end in itself. Again play is often a form of "wishful thinking" which provides scope for the imaginative and day-dreaming tendency in children, and, to a less extent, young people and adults, and it can also have a salutary cathartic effect for potentially dangerous repressed desires and feelings. Providing as it does an outlet for an innate biological urge, and satisfying certain basic psychological needs and instinctive forces, play can be a patent factor in education. This is especially true with regard to the education of infants and young children to whom play is the breath of life; it is also true, if to a less extent, of adolescents, young people and adults of all ages. At all ages and stages of growth, normal men and women play; they play individually, in pairs, and in small or large groups, and a man or woman who has lost the zest to play, at least at certain times, has usually lost his or her zest for life. Since therefore, play is such a universal, spontaneous and joyful human experience, it is potentially a powerful educative force and one which no educator can afford to ignore. This has been clearly realised in our day, and serious efforts are being made at all stages of a child's education to utilise what may broadly be termed play-way methods to inject new life and vigour into the traditionally dull and cheerless work of teaching and learning.

No one plays so freely, so imaginatively, and for such extended periods as a young child. "If," says Dr. Isaacs, "we are asked to mention the one supreme psychological need of the young child the answer will have to be play." And, she adds, "Those who have watched the play of children have looked upon it as Nature's means of individual education". The modern Nursery School or Class, accordingly, which caters for pre-school children from three to five years of age, has play as its *raison d'être*, it aims to provide a rich play environment with wide and varied opportunities for individual, group and co-operative play. In and through this rich play environment the young child not only leads a full life, but learns to understand life; he not only develops all sides of his budding personality, but also learns to adjust himself

both to his peers and to the adult members of the Nursery School world in which, between the formative years of three to five, he lives and moves, and has his being. The dynamic many-sided needs of his growing body, emotions and mind are all catered for in the toys, activities and experiences provided in a good Nursery School or class, and a rich, well-balanced and many-sided personality is the result from which the desire to read, write and number, emerges naturally and spontaneously when the child reaches the appropriate stage of maturation for them.

This "maturation stage" for reading, writing and number is reached by most normal children around the mental age of five or six plus, hence at the Infant or Kindergarten school level from 5-7 children in most progressive schools begin to be initiated into the elements of the 3R's. In these infant years, however, play, constructive, creative and imitative continues to be the best and most effective method of catching and holding the interest of children, and even the 3R's to be effectively and enduringly taught and learnt have to be imparted largely through "play-way methods." It is true a certain amount of drill and repetition is also necessary at this stage, but even this is made, palatable through various stimulating games and absorbing activities, such as miming and dramatics, and small projects such as running a shop or a Post Office, help to give significance and meaning to the difficult process of initiating children into the mysteries of the 3R's.

The net result of such "Play-Way" methods, however, it must be emphasised, is not "learning without tears," or the complete "free expression" or rather licence that characterises some so-called Progressive Schools in the U.K. and the U.S.A. Even small children realise that a certain amount of drudgery and drill are inescapable in school as in daily life, and, if allowed complete licence in school, are apt to react as did a young new-comer in an ultra-progressive school who plaintively asked the teacher after a couple of days, "Teacher, must we do what we like again today?". Indeed it cannot be too strongly or too often emphasised, that the underlying aim of a play-way approach in the infant years is not to encourage children to do what they like but to like what they do.

When children attain the Primary or Junior school age of seven to eleven they are usually expected in most schools "to put away childish things" and to knuckle down to the serious business of mastering the tools of learning. Methods and discipline both become more rigid, and teaching and learning more formal and less interesting. Modern psychological and educational opinion is beginning to seriously question the validity of this approach, and to emphasise that the Junior School child is different in degree rather than in kind from the infant. It is true that school life has to be made more real and more earnest for the seven to eleven age group, and that the basic tools of learning must be mastered by them at this stage. Still, as the Hadow Report stressed, "the Junior school curriculum must be thought of in terms of activity and experience rather than knowledge to be learnt and facts to be acquired," and a famous psychologist insists that "the need of the infant school child is for activity, of the Junior school child for creative activity." The activity which the Junior school child needs is, however, not merely physical activity, but mental stimulation, constructive and creative work and rich and varied opportunities for exploration and experiment and for social living if he is to realise all his potentialities at this stage of his growth to maturity. Hence, besides more formal methods and a certain measure of drill and drudgery, the Junior school child needs play-way methods such as dramatics, modelling, gardening, projects, excursions etc. if his heart is to be taken captive and his whole-hearted co-operation enlisted in his own education. And unless the growing child's active and effective co-operation is enlisted, no true or enduring education will be possible, and even the limited task of mastering the 3R's will be retarded and handicapped.

At the Secondary stage, the child has to utilise the tools of learning acquired at the Junior school stage to complete his school education, and to lay the foundation for his further education, either at an institution of higher education or in the hard school of life. At this stage also the drudgery, discipline and hard work that are essential on the part of the student will be accepted more willingly, and will produce greater and more enduring results, if the play-way approach



is utilised to a greater extent than has been done in the past. Hence great modern educationists like Whitehead, Dewey and Tagore have believed, and endeavoured to translate this belief into action, that the gap between work and play must be bridged in school, both inside and outside the class-room, to preserve that element of spontaneity and creativity which is characteristic of both work and play at their best. Such a marriage between work and play will, they are convinced, make schools much more effective and promote true learning, skill, attitudes and values among boys and girls. With this end in view play-way methods, such as the "Littleman Lectures" of Caldwell Cook, Mock Parliaments and Debates, dramatisation, group surveys, environmental studies, educational excursions, and small-and-large-scale educational projects, which involve the use of some or all the above methods now figure prominently among standard class-room, procedures and experiences in progressive schools in the U.K., the U.S.A. and to some extent, even in our country. And outside the classroom, a wide variety of co-curricular activities have been made a complementary and integral part of the total curriculum through which adolescents are educated in a modern Secondary school. Such activities and experiences embody and give the fullest possible scope to the play instinct in adolescents, for free choice, spontaneity, initiative and joy are of their essence.

Work, which the Dictionary defines, as "efforts directed towards an end," and play which is defined as "exercises in amusement"; education for earning a better living, and education for living a better life; the conservative and the creative factors in education—unless true harmony and synthesis is achieved between these apparently conflicting elements, no true, enduring or total education of a child or an adult will be possible.

## CHILD-CENTRED OR LIFE-CENTRED SCHOOL?

"THERE was a Golden Age", according to a well-known educational philosopher, "when there was no formal education. Life—the life of the family, and the life of the tribe, constituted all the education there was. Nobody told anybody else what to do. Everybody had his place according to his capacity, and received everything according to his needs". In such simple, idyllic societies, (a few of which still exist, though they are a fast vanishing species!), the dichotomy that is implicit in the title of this chapter did not exist. Such education, informal or formal, as was given was both child-centred and life-centred, aiming to induct the child into a specific way of life and to enable him to play a well-defined role, or series of roles, as he negotiated "the Seven Ages of Man" as a member of his family, clan or tribe.

With the development from the simplicity of the clan or tribe to the complexity of our modern technological societies, however, the scope of education widened, deepened, and grew in complexity and comprehensiveness, with the result that educational objectives which formerly converged began to diverge and even, in some cases, to conflict with one another.

This has been the fate in our day of what have been described by their protagonists as 'Child-Centred' and 'Life-Centred' education. Each of these objectives is by itself and of itself unexceptionable, and they can do, and should complement each other. Unfortunately, largely due to an excess of zeal on the part of their respective champions, they are often regarded today as being, if not openly antagonistic, at least allergic to each other.

This modern conflict between child-centred and life-centred education, (a conflict which has been most acute in the U.S.A.), has dwarfed on earlier conflict, a conflict that is still very much alive in India, between subject-education and child-centred education. The advocates of subject-centred education state that while in infancy and early

childhood education may start with the needs and interests of the child, yet ere long every child must be introduced to the culture of his country in particular and of mankind in general. They maintain that the traditional and newer subjects of the school curriculum represent the intellectual capital of mankind, and that the primary aim of education is to transmit to the child this cultural heritage.

Education in India is still largely, if not entirely, subject-centred rather than child-centred; it is as a result academic and text-bookish in approach, the demands of the subject rather than the child determine the content of the various syllabuses, and teaching is organised on logical rather than psychological lines. Reacting against this somewhat arid and uncongenial approach, the modern paidocentric school of educationists in India stresses that the child should be the focus of all educational planning, and that the needs, interests, abilities and aptitudes of the growing child, at the various psychological stages of his growth, should determine both the content of the syllabuses and the methods by which they are imparted. The main emphasis according to the Child-centred school must be on the child as a learner rather than on subjects, and the approach to the curriculum should be psychological not logical. They insist that the primary objective must be to determine the child's needs, capacities and ways of learning, at different ages and stages of his growth to maturity, and that educators must be ready, willing and able to adapt and modify the content of traditional-subject syllabuses and methods of teaching in the light of these so as to promote the all-round and balanced psychological development of the child.

Starting from these first premises, the child-centred school began reorganising the curriculum on psychological lines. In the process a few of the traditional subjects were devalued, much traditional subject-matter content was scrapped, and new subjects like "Social Studies", which cut across well-entrenched subject matter barriers, came into being. A parallel and related revolution took place in the equally traditional fields of school methodology, discipline and organisation. "Activity methods" of all kinds began to supplement, or in some cases replace traditional "talk and

chalk" or lecture methods; free, self-imposed discipline was advocated in place of authoritarian, externally-imposed discipline, and traditional and rigid Time Tables and School organisation become freer and more flexible.

What Sir John Adams called the "paido-centric movement" in early 20th century education brought a new spirit and vigour into the traditional school life and curriculum, and succeeded in putting the child in the centre of the educational picture. Unfortunately, like most radical reforms, the movement was carried to extremes. Traditional subjects were unduly depreciated; the new curriculum and subjects often lacked educational pith and substance; the new methods and 'free discipline' tended towards "soft pedagogy", verging into licence. "Activity education" and the "Project Method" in particular, the pet slogans of the Child-centred school, tended to be hailed as a panacea for all the ills of education, and activities and experiences began to be regarded as ends in themselves, instead of as means and starting points, it being forgotten that "the value of activities and experiences lies in the extent of which they help in the acquisition of knowledge with understanding, and in the development of aptitudes and ideals which contribute to the formation of character". Indeed, activity for the sake of activity can be as pointless, as futile, and as sterile as book knowledge, and only too often protagonists of the activity school tended to equate activity with physical activity to the neglect of mental activity which alone can give point and substance to the former. Another defect of child-centred education was that it tended to overemphasise the need to develop the individuality of each child to the fullest possible extent, and to underemphasise the child-in-society and the importance of the social role which every child has to play if he is to develop into a balanced individual and a wholesome personality. In fact, too much stress on meeting individual needs and interests may, in the absence of a worthwhile social goal, lead teachers and educationists to concentrate on the more transitory needs and interests of children to the neglect of those more worth-while and enduring needs, the development of which would be of much greater and more lasting value both to the individual himself and to the society in which he lives, and moves, and has his being.



The Life-centred school of educational theory largely originated as a reaction against the excesses of both the Child-centred and subject-centred schools. The primary objective of education for the advocates of this school of thinking is education for life-adjustment, and they tend to stress the sociological and social aspects of education rather than the individual and personal aspects. The social aim of education as a preparation for life, the imperative need to educate the individual as a citizen and member of society, and to teach him to develop his individuality for the good of the community, are the basic objectives for the protagonists of life-centred education. The overall curriculum, the subjects taught, the methods used, the discipline, and in fact all aspects of its organisation and administration of schools must be specifically geared to promote education for citizenship and education for life adjustment among the students. Emphasis on the group rather than the individual, on group methods rather than individual competition, on the use of community resources, on the integration and interpenetration of school and real life—these are some of the distinguishing features of life-centred education. The *raison d'être* of Basic Education, that education should be for life, and that it should be closely correlated and integrated with the natural and social environment of the child would be very much in tune with the rationale of the life-centred school of educational theory and practice.

This re-emphasis on the individual-in-society, on the community rather than the individual, on education as preparation for life rather than for examinations was a healthy reaction against the excesses of the child-centred and subject-centred education. Unfortunately the theory of life-centred education was in its turn carried to extremes, both in theory and practice and in our time we are seeing a re-emphasis on a partial rehabilitation of both child-centred and subject-centred education.

Child-centred, subject-centred or life-centred education? What should be the ultimate goal of our endeavours as teachers and educationists? It should be clear from what has been written so far that each of these objectives represents an intrinsically worthwhile goal, and that they complement

and complete one another, each making up, to some degree, for the deficiencies and exaggerations of the other. The overall objective of education is to help every boy and girl to grow to full maturity of body and mind and spirit, in and through the society in which he lives, and moves, and has his being, and for life in which, as an individual, as a person and as a good citizen, he is being prepared.

The starting point in our endeavours to achieve this comprehensive objective must always be the individual child, his abilities, aptitudes, interests and ambitions, for a good educator, like a good carpenter, must work with the grain and not against it. Each child is a unique person, and, if education is to promote the fullest development of the individual into a well-rounded and many-sided person, it must of necessity be child-centred. But no child is an island, nor is he being prepared for a Robinson Crusoe existence on a desert island! A child starts life not as an atomic entity, but as a member of the small close-knit society of the family, and largely but by no means entirely, through the larger society of the school he is prepared for the still wider society outside the school walls in which he will work and live on leaving school. Hence his education at school, while starting from but always returning to the individual child's abilities, aptitudes, needs and interests, must orient these towards socially desirable ends so that the child will become a good citizen and a creative member of his society, and find his individual fulfilment largely in, through, and for society.

Child-centred and life-centred education may thus be regarded as Siamese Twins whose separation will almost inevitably end fatally for both. And these twin objectives are attained in the average school through the "Curriculum", using the term in its widest sense as the sum total of all the educative activities and experiences provided in a school both inside and outside the class-room. Both the traditional and the newer subjects of the curriculum, aiming as they do to impart basic knowledge and basic skills, attitudes and values to the growing child and, provided they are studied both in breadth and depth, play an invaluable and irreplaceable role in promoting true child-centred education. And if the subjects are not kept rigidly apart in watertight

compartments, but correlated with each other, and with the natural and social environment of the child, so that these potentialities are fully exploited they can do much to prepare children for life.

Subject-centred, child-centred and life-centred education, in short, are not mutually exclusive but complementary goals in education. Their common motto, like that of the Three Musketeers is and always should be, "All for one, and One for All".

## XXVI

### VOCATIONAL EDUCATION FOR ALL

DURING the past quarter century, two apparently contradictory trends have been clearly visible in the evolution of educational theory and practice—the demand for a greater degree of general education, and an increasing emphasis on vocational education. The former has been rendered necessary by the increasing change and the growing complexity of modern life and the speeding up of technological development, the latter because it has been realised that education to be a complete preparation for life must also effectively prepare the child for earning his living.

These dual tendencies appear at first sight to be mutually exclusive, and till comparatively recent times they were so treated. Liberal education was in ancient Greece the education of the free man, vocational education that of the slave. The Renaissance educators perpetuated this dichotomy; liberal education was for them the education for the elite, it was a way of escape from work with the hands and pursued for its own sake and not for any practical or utilitarian purpose; while vocational education was the education of artisans and workers, and was looked upon with contempt, because it had a utilitarian objective and involved work with ones' hands.

In India the dichotomy between vocational education and general education, between the education of the craftsman and that of the office worker was, and still is, even greater than it was in the West. Traditionally most Indian children received vocational education in the trade of the father or the housework of the mother, and grew up in society through participation in the activities proper to his social caste or community. While this type of education had, and has, its advantages yet it tends to be excessively narrow, in so far that, in most cases, not even the elements of the 3R's are taught, leaving the children basically and functionally illiterate, and moreover, it was not dynamic and forward-looking and tended to perpetuate traditional modes of behaviour. Formal



education, on the other hand, when it did develop rapidly in India in the 19th and 20th centuries, also tended to be excessively narrow and bookish, to withdraw the child, temporarily if not permanently, from participation in community activities, and to be imparted in an artificial environment divorced from real life. This tended to increase the distinction between the students taking general and vocational education respectively, to lead the former to denigrate work and to be alienated from their homes and communities, and the latter to despise any kind of book-learning. Hence in India, as in the rest of the world, the divorce between general and vocational education was an accepted fact.

To John Dewey the American philosopher-educationist, though he was not the first to do so, must go the credit for revealing clearly and convincingly to his contemporaries the dangerous fallacy inherent in this fatal division in the sphere of education. He pointed out that vocational education was a part of the traditional scheme of education through the centuries; that the gentlemen who in the past ostensibly acquired a liberal education for its own sake really did so with a view to preparing for some vocation (teaching or the Ministry), or simply that of a gentleman of leisure. All so-called liberal education, Dewey emphasised, had a specific object in view, and was, therefore, in its own way as much "vocational" as that of the craftsman. Dewey went further and attacked the academic, unreal, liberal curriculum of his day as being out of touch with contemporary realities and a poor preparation for life, and he pleaded eloquently for the introduction of practical and vocational elements and of "learning by doing" into the schools.

Inspired by Dewey and other prominent educationists the movement towards "vocationalising" education gathered momentum, and was carried to extremes. Education became excessively utilitarian and narrow, and premature specialisation and vocational training took the place of that wide culture and all-round development of the child which was the best feature of the old system. A reaction against this unhealthy trend was inevitable; and at present renewed emphasis is being placed on the old idea of a general or liberal education.

The time is, therefore, ripe for a revaluation of the concepts of liberal or general and vocational education, and for a redefinition of the proper relationship that should exist between them. Liberal or general education is, as the author sees it, a preparation for life in general, an education that develops the all-round personality of the child in and for society. Far from being useless, or a mere ornament, it is a preparation for the vocation of manhood, and equips a man with the capacity to fill any vocation in life. A vocational education is one aspect, albeit an integral and a vitally important one, of this liberal education; it is the education and training that fits man for a specific vocation in life. "The issue therefore", to quote a famous American educationist, "is not, shall we educate for a vocation or shall we educate for ideas, social adjustment and appreciation of the arts. We need both. Vocational education is a natural form of education for all. We need people who are at home both in the world of craft work and the world of ideas. A democracy must strenuously avoid a sharp separation of the two. They are twin aspects of a whole education."

Viewed in this light, it is apparent that there can be no real conflict between the part and the whole, and that a complete education must include both. Yet many fallacies still exist about vocational education, and do untold harm to the education of the majority of children. Vocational education is not, as is believed in some quarters, a distinct type of education, different in kind from a liberal education and inferior to it in quality and status. It is an essential part of a liberal education, for it aims to help the child towards socio-economic independence and self-sufficiency, as well as to develop him as a person, and as such it is necessary for all children whose education will be incomplete without it. To quote Prof. Thorndike, the famous American psychologist, "School must prepare for efficiency in the serious business of life, as well as in the refined use of leisure. The ideal of the scholar has given way to the ideal of the capable man, capable in scholarship, but also capable in physique and in the power to manipulate things", and in the formation of this "capable man", vocational education has a vital part to play.

If we take due note on the results of recent researches in psychology in the U.K. and the U.S.A., an even stronger case can be made out for vocational education for all. Mr. John Duncan in a remarkable little book "The Education of the Ordinary Child", based on practical experience and controlled experiment, claims that a vocational education, in its widest sense, is the best form of general education for the average child, whose abilities and aptitudes, he holds, are more fully developed by a realistic, practical and vocational education than by the current academic curriculum. Duncan's findings are supported by other psychologists, Inspectors, heads and teachers of ordinary schools who have children in them representing all shades of intelligence, from the clever and the academic to those whose ability is limited and interest in academic matters still more limited! The latter types of children can only really benefit from a schooling and prepared for life in free India by properly organised vocational courses. Such courses will stimulate many boys and girls, who find the present excessively academic education boring and frustrating; such pupils indeed will only find fulfilment in a vocationalised curriculum that is linked up to the real world outside the school walls.

The view that a more vocational and realistic education is essential for average and below average children was strongly endorsed by the Newsom Report—Half Our Future—which dealt specifically with this type of child. "The work of the schools", says the Committee, "must not seem the antithesis to real life, but should provide an education by means of a curriculum containing large opportunities for practical work and related to living interests." This report of the Central Advisory Board of Education in England placed very special emphasis on the imaginative and stimulating teaching of practical subjects, in addition to academic ones, in the curriculum, especially to the less able pupils. "The practical subjects", stated the Committee, "have a special value for the less-able pupils because it is often easier to make the bridge between school and non-school in these subjects than in others." "We believe", the Committee added, "they can offer a satisfactory approach to learning for many, perhaps most of our pupils, as experiences which are worthwhile in themselves, as activities

which can recognisably be related to real life, and as a stimulus to effort in other learning. We also believe that some of the other learning in subjects, which are not in the strict sense practical, should start more directly for the pupils' experience. In this sense the whole curriculum should be made more realistic." Courses in the curriculum, therefore, should either be general, with a strong realistic and vocational bias or vocational, but taught in such a way as to be vehicles of general education.

The Kothari Commission in its forward-looking Report also visualises the future trend of school education for all pupils in India to be a fruitful synthesis of general education and vocational education, general education containing some elements of pre-vocational and technical education, and vocational education, in its turn, having some element of general education. Projecting the future development of a highly scientific and technological based industrialised society, and visualising education as an instrument in the rapid achievement of such a society, the Commission emphasises that too sharp a distinction should not be drawn between general education and vocational or technical education. General school education should introduce children to the world of work and to an understanding of science and technology. Technology itself is developing so rapidly that a student who receives only a narrow and specialised training, to the exclusion of general education in science and the humanities, will quickly find his "skills obsolescent, lacking a base for rapid re-training and ill-fitted for the complexities and demands of the modern world." Therefore, all general education should contain some technical education of a pre-vocational type, and all technical education should contain an appropriate element of general education. And the Commission proceeds to spell out that all good and purposeful education should consist of at least four basic elements—Literacy—Study of languages, Humanities and Social Science—Numeracy—Study of Mathematics and the Natural Sciences—Work experience and Social service. Work experience which has been made an integral and indispensable part of the all-round education of all children will provide vocational education to all children, with varying degree of emphasis at different stages of their education.



Vocational education is thus rightly seen by the Commission as an essential and integral part of school education, whether pupils intend to specialise in general education or technical education. This fact is admitted by most educationists today, it only becomes dangerous when the vocational education given is either premature or excessively narrow in interpretation, for to achieve its objectives it must be broadly interpreted, and given at the right time and by the right teachers.

Vocational education, except perhaps for very dull children, should form the superstructure on a broad foundation of general education, and should provide scope for the practical applications of knowledge, for that intimate union of theory practice which enriches both. In our day, the best type of vocational education for the majority of children is perhaps that described by the Kothari Commission as "Work Experience" a fuller treatment only which is given in Chapter XXVII.

Such an education should include a training in good work habits, and the development of attitudes and personality traits necessary for success in the chosen vocation, and that skill in human relationship, in the ability to work with and for others, or to get others to work with one, without which real success in any profession is impossible.

Vocational education should not aim at training children for one particular job, but at developing certain basic skills of hand and eye and in India must aim to impart knowledge, skills and insights needed for modern Industry or scientific agriculture. And, finally, it must provide the child with the fullest possible information of the various avenues of employment open to him when he leaves school, and supply him with the necessary educational and vocational guidance to enable him to choose that vocation for which his aptitudes and abilities best fit him and to avoid unsuitable or blind alley occupations.

While some form of manual training is possible in the primary school, yet, by and large, real vocational education will not begin till the child has mastered the elements of the 3Rs, and through the arts and crafts, laid the foundation of these basic skills of hand and eye necessary for success in

any job and in life. With the dawn of adolescence, children begin to extend their interests beyond the walls of the school and to think seriously of their future vocation; and about this time special aptitudes and abilities also begin to make their appearance. In later adolescence especially children begin to chafe against the excessively academic and unrealistic education given in most schools, and to demand an education that has more relevance to the serious business of their future vocation in life. This is the obvious moment for introducing a broadly vocational bias into the curriculum through a well-planned, comprehensive scheme of Work Experience, and for adapting the general curriculum to the special aptitudes and abilities of the vocational ambitions of the individual. Only thus will education, during the difficult period of adolescence, acquire a relevance and reality and an effectiveness that it at present lacks.

The main difficulty in the imparting of vocational education through "Work Experience" in Indian Schools will be to find suitable teachers. The average teacher is educated and trained in the old academic methods and approach, and lacks the technical skill and knowledge necessary to make a real success of any type of vocational education. The pure craftsman, on the other hand, though possessing the requisite skill and knowledge of his vocation, is generally unable to impart these effectively, and to give a vocational education in the best sense as opposed to a vocational training. What is needed in the craftsman-educator and such gifted individuals are rarely found on the staff of the average school. The best solution would probably be for selected teachers from each school to be given the opportunity to specialise in particular crafts and vocations, and to make a careful study of the difficult and complex task of correlating vocational with liberal education. Only then will vocational education and work experience be of real benefit to the pupils in helping them to be capable not only in scholarship but in the practical business of life.

It has been cynically remarked that a liberal education "enables one to ignore those rewards in this life which it renders one incapable of earning" and that a vocational education and training "enables one to gain those rewards

in life which it renders one incapable of enjoying". If the terms liberal and vocational education are narrowly interpreted to stand for different and virtually exclusive types of education, as they have been so often in the past, there would be some truth in the above cynicism. But vocational education and work experience, based on a broad foundation of liberal education, will give point and significance to the latter, and enable men to both gain and to enjoy the rewards of life.

## LINKING LEARNING WITH EARNING

ONE of the most obvious deficiencies in the field of education since the Industrial Revolution, as the Kothari Commission points out, has been the widening gap between education and life, the lack of integration between the two, and the distance, between the school on the one hand and the busy world outside its walls on the other. Faced with the growing complexity of the modern world, for life in which they were supposed to be preparing their students, schools have in most countries tended to withdraw from the world, cut themselves off, to a greater or less extent, from the community, and retire into an ivory tower of their own creation.

Schools in the U.S.A. are by and large an exception to this rule. The Latin Grammar Schools transplanted from Europe to the U.S.A. were largely academic hothouses. But very early in the history of American education the essentially practical genius of the American pioneers revolted against the narrowly academic type of education given in these schools, and began to fashion a newer, more practical and more utilitarian type of High School education which brought the Public High Schools into closer and more vital relationship with community life outside their walls. This movement towards making education more realistic, more practical, more community-centred, more vocational, and, almost inevitably, less cultural, like all violent reactions, has undoubtedly been carried to extremes in many parts of the U.S.A. Still while one regrets and discounts its exaggerations and aberrations, one must admit that the attempt to forge as many points of contact between the school and the work-a-day world as possible gives to High School education in the States, especially for the non-academic type of child, a point, a significance, and urgency and a reality that is conspicuously lacking in the secondary education provided by High Schools in India.

The Public High School in the U.S.A. today endeavours



to be, in theory and in practice, a community institution which prepares adolescent youth to lead a full and happy life in the adult world outside the school walls. Among the most important of the adult responsibilities the youth will have to shoulder on leaving school is that of being a worker and wage earner. A relatively small but increasing number will put off earning their living till they have gone through college, the majority start work soon after graduating from High School.

This is true not only in the U.S.A., but in most other countries including India. But because of the active hostility or passive non-co-operation between education and industry, the transition from school to work is extremely abrupt, the shy, immature, sheltered adolescent with little experience as to what is ahead, is usually pitchforked into the world of work and expected to blossom almost overnight into an adult workman! That it must be extremely difficult for the average adolescent to make this transformation unaided is obvious, yet schools in most countries, beyond giving their school-leavers a certain amount of rather vague advice and so-called vocational guidance, do little towards helping them to make the necessary adaptation as quickly and as painlessly as possible.

It is to the credit of the American High Schools that they have not only seen the need but have realised their responsibility in this important matter, and most of them regard it as one of their primary responsibilities to develop functional programmes whereby School-leavers, intending to start work immediately after graduation, are gradually inducted into the world of work, and are helped to make the transition from school to work without too great a strain. This initiation of the adolescent by a carefully supervised series of planned experiences into the world of work has, due to the raising of the School-leaving age in most States to 16, 17 or 18 and the unwillingness of the Labour Unions to permit juveniles to enter the Labour market till they are 18 and thus eligible for adult wages, become increasingly important. Accordingly most Public High Schools in the U.S.A. are experimenting with what are called "Work-experience" programmes.

These Work-experience programmes are usually the fruit of joint thinking and planning by the School authorities and Industries. "Instead of trying", says an Educational administrator "with questionable success to imitate Industry, or Industry trying to train technical personnel without a sufficiently broad foundation, and without going into the attendant socio-economic problem, Industry and the School supplement each other, and also work co-operatively in some parts of the programme."

The actual programmes are of various types, and are organised with different degrees of thoroughness and complexity. In some High Schools they are exploratory in nature and give the pupil an introduction to sample conditions of work in various fields, through various courses in the High School together with field work in the form of visits of observation to factories, offices etc., industrial surveys and actual work for a short period in one or more jobs. Employers, ever on the look-out for likely young recruits, co-operate with the schools so that the pupils are given the opportunity of getting a bird's eye view of the various employment opportunities in the neighbourhood, not only in theory but in practice.

Contacts between the schools and industry and commerce are of various kinds. Big Stores, for instance, permit senior girls to work behind the counter for a day or to model their latest clothes, while large offices permit girls who are studying commercial subjects at school to work in the office for a day or a week as part-time members of the staff. During this period the girls, though under general supervision and guidance both from the School Staff and Senior members of the office staff, are treated as far as possible as workers. They take down the letters for clients, eat in the Canteen with the other full-time workers, and keep the same hours and are paid for their work so that the experience is, as far as possible, an experience of actual working conditions, perhaps the most valuable part of which is the opportunity to talk to those already in the business and get a true picture of its advantages and disadvantages. Similar work experiences are provided for the boys in Factories, Offices, Workshops etc.

A second type of experience which, while not narrowly vocational, is of great value in orienting students to adult life in the community takes the form of active participation in the community life around them. High School students conduct surveys of actual conditions with regard to problems that affect them, and, as a result of these surveys, they often shame their elders into taking the necessary remedial action. In the town of Hartford in Connecticut, for instance, there is a Junior Town Council, consisting entirely of student representatives from the City's High Schools, that is elected and functions very much in the same fashion as the adult Town Council. This Junior Council, some years ago, made a survey into the rapidly growing number of automobile accidents in which adolescents were involved, and discovered that in most cases these accidents were caused because the drivers lacked proper training and experience in the handling of their automobiles. The practical remedy suggested by the Junior Council was a course of "Driver-Education" at High Schools for all students needing it. The School Board, faced with the formidable evidence put forward in the Survey, had no option but to yield gracefully to their demands, and "Driver-Education" is now offered as an optional but very popular course in Hartford Schools.

A third type of Work experience takes the form of "Campus Work Projects" of the type the Central Ministry of Education endeavoured, during the First and Second Five Year Plans, to promote in India. Students help to plan and build various additions and improvements to their own schools. Thus the author found that "Industrial Arts" students at Broken Bow High School had planned and built a model cottage for the Home Science students to practise in, while in other schools students had built their own Cinder Track, Stadia, Swimming pools etc. Such work experience is educationally of immense value, it encourages initiative, hard work and a spirit of self-help, and gives students a real pride in their own work and their own school, apart from the financial saving to the school authorities.

The fullest and most complete work experience is, however, usually that provided for specifically "vocational" students who are being educated according to the Smith-Mundt

formula under which schools can become eligible for generous Federal grants. Such students spend half the school day in school, during which they study general subjects like English, Social Studies, Physical Education and subjects bearing on their future occupations like related mathematics, science and vocational subjects, and half the day in selected occupations for which they are preparing. During work time they are actually on the job as apprentice workmen and are paid appropriate wages. However, they are regarded primarily as learners, their work, conduct and reactions are carefully supervised by the School staff, and they are given "credits" for their work-learning experience which count towards graduation from High School.

Real work experience of various types and degrees, as far as possible under actual working conditions prevalent in the world outside the walls of the school, thus forms a significant part of the education of perhaps the majority of the High School students in the U.S.A. In Germany, under the inspiring influence of Kershensteiner, whose basic philosophy was that "work with one's hand is the foundation of all true knowledge", practical activity and an intimate link between the school and apprenticeship training, what is called a "Work-school" programme is widely prevalent in many types of vocational secondary schools. And in the U.K. increasing links are being forced between schools and factories, firms and offices, to provide students in their last year or two with a gradual and planned initiation into the Adult world of work and leisure. And other European countries are experimenting with deliberately providing experience of employment on a release-from-school basis inside the regular educational programme.

What in the U.S.A., and other Western countries, is a part of good school practice, has been exalted in the U.S.S.R. into what is termed the "Poly-technical principle" since 1958. According to this principle all secondary education must bridge the gap between school and life by school instruction being linked with productive work. Hence secondary education in the U.S.S.R. not only aims at bringing out the technical links of all subjects, and giving students a "Poly-technical horizon", but also at providing them, in carefully



graded steps, with various forms of Work Experience from the Kindergarten to the end of the Secondary school. At first this Work experience is given to the School Craft rooms and Workshops, but in the latter years it is given in factories and farms so that it approximates as nearly as possible to real work, and students are paid for the work they do.

The Kothari Commission, obviously influenced by the Russian experience, has recommended that all school education must be linked with Industry and agriculture and that Work experience should in future be an integral part of all education—general and vocational—from the Kindergarten to Class X, and it has defined Work experience as “any productive work in the school, home, farms or factory”. The Commission has emphasised that the main function of this Work experience is to integrate education with life, and to prepare students to be productive members of the industrialised, science-based and technological society which is emerging in India. With this end in view, the Commission is of the considered opinion that a well-organised programme of Work experience should, at least from the primary stage, result in earning for the student, in cash or in kind. This “earning while learning” would help students to pay part of the cost of their education. The amount earned would increase as the student travelled up the school, “the ultimate objectives” concludes the Commission, “should be to move towards a situation in which the education of a student is not held complete, unless he participates in some type of Work experience in real life conditions, and earns some money however small, towards his own maintenance. This will help to develop in him values which promote economic growth, such as appreciating the importance of productive work and manual labour, willingness and capacity for hard work and thrift. We realise that this is no easy task. But it will bring adequate dividends in the long run.”

The Commission's recommendations to make Work experience, and earning while learning, a part of the education of all children is commendable, but it must be implemented with caution.

Valuable though such Work experience can be, and is in linking school and life and study and experience, still it is

hedged about with obvious dangers and difficulties, and certain essential precautions will have to be taken if it is to be educationally advantageous.

To begin with it must be clearly understood that the primary functions of any Work experience at school is educational in the broadest sense of the word, and not commercial. While payment for such work gives an element of realism and interest to such experience, earning must always be subordinate to learning.

Secondly, if Work experience is to be truly educative, the type of Work experience the student will profit from, considering his individual abilities, aptitudes and interests, must be carefully considered. Such work should not be narrow and routine work; it should be as broad, varied and flexible as possible, and provide scope for a variety of latent abilities and aptitudes, and the degree of participation and the type of employer also need careful consideration. The job should be such as to provide opportunities for acquiring new knowledge, skill, habits and attitudes, or provide scope for the exercise and application of knowledge and skill acquired at school, and it should not take up so much of the students' time and energies that he has none left for his "general education" at school. Further, this "general education" should be related to and integrated with his vocational experience, so that there is cross-fertilisation between the two and each acquires meaning and significance in the light of the other. And, finally, there must be active and full co-operation in this matter between students, teachers, parents and employers, at all stages and times, if the fullest value is to be garnered from "Work experience" programmes.

In India the grave shortage and narrow range of occupational opportunities, the limited apprenticeship facilities and novelty of the idea will make it difficult for schools to provide worthwhile "Work experience" programmes for all school students. Yet while it may be difficult, it should not be impossible for progressive schools to pioneer limited experiments along the lines indicated above. Chambers of Commerce and Employers would, the author feels, co-operate with school authorities if the right approach was made to them to provide proper facilities for certain types of Work experi-

ence, while other types like "Campus Work Projects" and "Community Surveys" and social service schemes of all kinds would be certainly within the reach of most schools provided they had the faith and the courage to initiate these worthwhile experiments. The gap between education and life, school and community must be bridged at as many points as possible. Work experience programmes are an excellent bridge between the two.

## XXVIII

### THE ROLE OF STUDENT ACTIVITIES IN THE SCHOOL

ONE of the most striking and beneficial educational revolutions in our day is the increasingly dynamic role being played by what are generally called "extra curricular activities" in the life of the average school. Ever since games and athletics came to play an important role in the education given in the Public Schools of England, such activities have increased in number, variety and importance so that today the curriculum or total programme of studies and activities offered by most progressive schools consists of two complementary and almost co-equal parts—the curriculum proper, and the "Extra—Curricular" activities. Diehards may still be found who frown at this usurpation of time and energy by what they regard as "extras", in the sense that, though pleasant, they are marginal to the business of learning, "side-shows" to the main business of the school; progressive Heads and teachers all over the world, however, have realised that these activities, far from being a waste of time, are often educationally as valuable as the regular school studies, and, in some cases, more valuable.

The American expression "Student Activities" has been deliberately chosen for the title of this chapter in preference to the common term "Extra-curricular", to avoid two common misconceptions—that such activities are something "extra" or apart from the main curriculum of the school, having little or no connection with it, and that they are a "frill" or luxury. "Student Activities" are neither purely ornamental nor a luxury; they are a vital necessity in the schools of today which would only be half as effective as they are without them. Further, they must be considered neither as parallel to nor divorced from the curriculum proper, but as an integral part of it, for the curriculum of a good school, to repeat oft-quoted lines of the Hadow Report, "must be thought of in terms of activity and experience, and



not merely of information to be learnt and facts to be acquired". Student activities grow naturally out of, and are in fact a logical extension of the formal curriculum, a putting into practice of the knowledge, skills, attitudes and ideals which the formal studies are meant to impart, a widening and enriching of experience. In short, the school programme should be conceived of as a whole, with the studies proper and the student activities complementing and correlating with each other, and a real partnership and two-way traffic of ideas and practices should be consciously built up between the activities and experiences provided inside and those provided outside the class-room. "Co-curricular activities", says an educationist, "are no fringe benefits, they form an integral and indispensable part of the total school programme. Schools can never fully develop the individual, nor help him to find his or her true place in society, unless there is an intelligently planned co-curricular programme for all schools."

This progressive point of view is heartily endorsed by the Kothari Commission. "We conceive of the school curriculum", states the Commission, "as the totality of learning experiences that the school provides for the pupils, through all its manifold activities in the school and outside that are carried on under its supervision. From this point of view the distinction between curricular and extra-curricular work ceases to exist, and a school camp and games and sports are curricular, or rather co-curricular activities."

The benefits of a well-planned and executed programme of student activities, planned as a complementary but integral part of a liberal education, are incalculable. The ultimate aim of education is to develop all the potentialities of the growing child, physical, mental, emotional and spiritual in and, to a large extent for society. Towards the achievement of this all-embracing end, class-room activities and the ordinary courses of instruction do much; they also leave much undone. Student activities, such as games, Clubs and Societies of all types, educational visits and excursions, camps and tours, social service and work experience often provide a direct extension and illumination of what goes on in the class-room, more often they help compensate for the deficiencies of class-room instruction, by developing abilities, attitudes,

skills and values not fully developed in the class; by helping children to discover new interests, temporary or permanent; by enabling students and staff to find and exercise unsuspected talents, and by giving scope to aptitudes which obtain little or no outlet in the average class-room. They satisfy basic needs, exercise the body-mind, promote physical fitness and provide healthy outlets for the emotions, thus enabling the students to achieve emotional stability, develop the non-cognitive skills, and give expression to the unfulfilled urge to do and make things, making the school a "hive of joyful, purposeful activity." and not merely a "Knowledge Cram-Shop!" They also help to bring teachers and pupils together in a more informal situation in which both get to know each other better, and in so doing they help to promote true physical and mental health, and to educate for mutual understanding, social maturity, co-operation and social adjustment by providing a much needed corrective to the excessively individualistic work and formal atmosphere of the class-room.

Student activities by calling into play hidden abilities and interests are also of great diagnostic value, not only to the children themselves but to those whose task it is to guide and advise them in the choice of their vocation. The seeds of many a career and a lifelong leisure-time occupation, and the birth of many an ideal have been made possible by the extra-class activities of a school giving students the opportunity to explore a variety of interests and activities.

"Student activities" also help to break down the isolation between the work of the school and the activities of the world outside by bridging the gap between work and play, studies and leisure-time activities, books and life, theory and practice, school and the natural and social environment of the child. Indeed one of the student activities greatest and most appealing attractions is the way they link the school with the home and with the community outside its walls.

The role of student activities in promoting social and emotional health and stability also gives them an undeniable therapeutic value. Research has conclusively proved that wastage and delinquency in schools which provide a rich and varied programme of such activities is much less than in schools which do not, for there are fewer drop-outs and

delinquents from among those who participate actively in co-curricular activities.

Finally, student activities are an excellent training ground for character in so far as they promote initiative, leadership, co-operation, esprit de corps, a sense of responsibility and inner discipline and provide students with an insight into the country's cultural tradition.

That many of these potential benefits are not achieved in fact, or achieved only partially, is usually due to the fact that student activities are often run by teachers who have little or no training in their theory and practice, and only the vaguest ideas of the objectives they are aiming at. Excessive but misdirected enthusiasm is as often the reason for their ineffectiveness as indifference or hostility. Student activities are an essential part of the school curriculum, but they must not be allowed—this applies especially to games and athletics—to usurp too great a place in the life of the school, else they will become “anti-curricular” instead of “co-curricular”. A sense of balance and proportion should be maintained, and no activity permitted to be started or continued unless it can show good effects comparable to the expenditure of time and money and energy involved. Secondly, Student activities must not be solely identified with games and athletics as they are in so many schools. Games and athletics are vitally important, but they loom far too large in the student activity programme of many schools. Such a programme should be as rich and varied as possible to cater for the wide variety of needs, interests and aptitudes of the boys and girls of the average school so that every child can find at least one activity which he enjoys, and in which can feel a sense of achievement and satisfaction.

To get the optimum advantages from student activities, certain further objectives should be kept in mind. Whether they take the form of games or societies, their aim should not be to train experts or specialists, and the development of the few should not be concentrated on to the neglect of the many; their *raison d'être* should be to raise the level of the average as well as develop the good. Again they should not function in isolation from the “studies” of the class-room, but should grow out of and be linked at every point with

them i.e. the Debating Club with Literature, games and gymnastics with Hygiene, the Young Gardeners Club with Botany, the Science Club with the Science Laboratory. Proper integration will ensure not only that the student activities provide an extension, illumination and application of the knowledge and skills acquired in the class-room, but that some of the spirit of joy and creativity that animates them will be carried over into and infect the ordinary everyday work of the class-room. Indeed extensive research in the U.S.A. and England have proved that healthy participation in student activities raises the level of scholarship in a school and in an individual.

To achieve this desirable end, however, student activities must be freely chosen by the students themselves. Any attempt at imposition or regimentation will destroy that element of joy, spontaneity and initiative in which their educational value chiefly consists. In organizing the actual activities, certain principles must be kept in mind. The number and type of student activities introduced by a school should be determined by local circumstances, the number of pupils on the roll, the available facilities, material and human, the needs of the school and of the pupils. Being student activities, such activities should, as far as possible, be initiated and run by the students themselves. It will, of course, be necessary for the staff to encourage, stimulate and guide such activities, but they should not dominate them as they do the class-room studies. Rules and regulations for membership should be discussed and drawn up by the members themselves, and should be as few as possible. Flexibility and fluidity should be the keynote of their organisation; when interest in any particular activity flags and dies, it should be shelved till interest reawakens, for it is useless to preserve the skeleton of a society or club when all interest and vitality have departed from it.

Apart from games, which are best held after school hours, it is an excellent plan to set aside one afternoon a week on which all the societies and clubs in the school could meet simultaneously, as do many schools in England and the U.S.A. Such a provision will have the psychological effect of making children realise that these activities are an integral and essen-



tial part of the life and working of the school, and the added advantage of reducing the load of extra class-work of the teachers on whom will naturally fall the main burden of guiding and stimulating student activities, though selected "experts" from among parents and others who are interested in the school and in children should be roped in to lend a hand in fields in which teachers are either not competent or unwilling to act as Student Activity Counsellors.

Teachers, like the children, should be free to start or direct any activity in the school in which they are interested, for on their enthusiasm and interest, as much as on that of the children, will depend the success or failure of any particular activity. Disputes and overlapping can be prevented by the Principal, whose responsibility is to have the final word whether an activity should be started or not, to balance, co-ordinate and supervise the entire programme of student activities in the school, and to integrate it with the main programme of studies. Paradoxical though it may appear to be, and however permissive they may appear to be, yet unobtrusive careful supervision of student activities by the Principal and the Teacher Sponsor is the key to the success or failure of student activities in the school. "Without wise supervision", says Prof. John Grinnell, "Student activities may have an effect opposite to what we intend. Carelessly conducted they can simply promote an evil already existing in the gang or group that dominates them. Any Principal or Sponsor who thinks his mere presence is enough, should have his head examined. Student activities need constant evaluation and supervision, even more than class-room activities because they are potentially more useful, and more dangerous."

The actual selection of suitable student activities from among the "infinite variety" of possible choices must be left, as stated earlier, to each individual school, and will be determined by its facilities and opportunities, and the interests and abilities of its staff and pupils. The ideal is to provide as wide and balanced a variety of activities as possible to cater for the 4H's—head, heart, hand and health (physical, mental, and spiritual), so that every child in the school will find at least one thing he enjoys doing, and which he can do

with a fair measure of competence and satisfaction. Students should be encouraged to join in more than one activity, but tactfully prevented from dissipating their energy in too many. Membership of each club or society or activity should be limited to those who have a real interest and aptitude for it, for, to quote Prof. S. N. Mukherjee, "the value of a small organised unit consisting of individuals with the same interest cannot be stressed too much. It brings the members close to one another and produces a type of intimacy which is not possible in the total school programme. It further gives the members a feeling of security and the opportunity to earn a recognition from their contemporaries which is not possible in the large and specialised group."

This feeling of belonging, of co-operation with others, of receiving and giving something special to friends and companions can also do much to provide a healthy outlet for the emotions, to sharpen the mind, and to shape the character and personality of pupil.

Finally, if such activities are really to become an integral part of the total educational programme, and if to make this possible, the regular school day is to be extended beyond nine to three, adequate administrative provision should be made to make this possible. This will mean, *inter alia*, that adequate account must be taken of student activities in designing and equipping new schools, in assessing the total staffing needs of schools, and in school financing and budgeting. And, as emphasised earlier, as much care must be taken by the school administration in planning and executing the programme of extra-curricular or student activities, which often take place perhaps out of school hours, as is taken in planning the programme of class activities. Stressing the need to make extra-curricular activities an integral part of the school programme, and the need for lengthening the school day to make this possible, the Newsom Report published by the Central Advisory Board of Education in the U.K. utters the salutary warning: "If the school day is to be lengthened at all, (to accommodate extra-curricular activities), the school must face an even more urgent responsibility to see that what goes on both in lessons and after them is genuinely rewarding. There is no point in merely extending the period of boredom."

Properly planned, organised and run, student activities are an invaluable and indispensable complement and completion of the "serious business" of class-room education; they contribute, in equal if not in greater measure, to the education of the whole man which it is the aim of every good school to promote. Ill-planned and half-hazardly carried out, they will do more good than harm. They are good servants, but bad masters.

## XXIX

### EDUCATION FOR LEISURE

"A SOCIETY", says a modern author, "that accepts as inevitable the divorce between work and leisure, and cultivates leisure as the only time for real living is a sick society."

What philosophers today are apt to describe as the "problem of leisure" has always existed in one form or another. In the past, when working for his living absorbed most of a man's waking time and energy, the problem for the majority of people was to find time for leisure; in our modern machine age, with the progressive reduction of work-time, the problem is one of using the large amount of leisure time on our hands in the most beneficial manner possible. Indeed, one of the paradoxes of our age is that the problem of finding a right use for leisure has been aggravated by the very machine which has made leisure for all possible!

The late G.B.S. dreamt of an ideal commonwealth in which "work is play, and play is life, three in one and one in three", but the average man and woman in the 20th century makes a very clear distinction between work and leisure; and the former is regarded, to a greater or less extent, as a necessary evil which provides him with the time and the money to enjoy the latter. With the increasing specialisation and automation that is characteristic of our age, the character of the average man's work is relatively unsatisfactory, satisfying only a very small part of his nature, hence he seeks in his leisure time all the joy, excitement and recreation he misses in his work.

The tragedy is that he seeks this joy and recreation generally in the wrong channels which are neither useful to himself—and often positively harmful—nor beneficial to society. Our robot civilization has tended to produce robot minds; the increasing mechanization of man's life has led to a mechanisation and regimentation of his minds, which has prepared the way for the tremendous standardisation in man's pleasures, and the far-reaching commercialisation of his leisure time



activities. Tied to a desk or confined to performing the same operation in a factory thousands of times a day, using only a fraction of his intelligence or personality, and longing for the hour of his release, the average man's one desire during his leisure is to escape from anything that even savours of physical or intellectual effort. He is out to kill time and deaden his faculties, so as to reconcile himself to the dreary, monotonous and soul-destroying character of his work.

The problem of leisure is largely the problem of work, and can never be completely solved so long as man regards his daily work as a form of drudgery and slavery. The man who takes no pleasure and derives no satisfaction from his work will seldom derive real pleasure and lasting satisfaction from his leisure-time activities. Leisure to be of fullest value must be a complement to one's work, not an escape from it, hence a transformation in the general character of work is necessary before leisure can be made most fruitful. It seems too much, in our increasingly mechanised and specialised age, to hope for such a transformation; work, if anything, is likely to become more mechanical and automatic in the future than in the past. The problem therefore resolves itself into enabling a man to use his leisure in such a manner as to compensate him for the uninteresting and limiting character of his work, to enable him to develop during his leisure time those aspects of his personality that, finding no outlet in his work, are in danger of atrophying through disuse, and to find that joy of living through the release of his creative impulses which he fails to find in his work.

Leisure, like freedom, wealth and so many other things that people covet in life, is not an end in itself, but a means to an end, something which can be a boon or a menace to mankind. A man is often forced by circumstances into a particular job; he is free to make of his leisure what he will, and his use—or abuse—of it not only reveals what he is but determines, in large measure, what he will be. Wisely used, leisure can make us happier, healthier and better individuals, and more useful and creative members of society; abused, it can stultify our minds, warp our personalities, and make us burdens and parasites on the community. To "kill time" which is the motive that inspires many, if not most, of our

leisure activities is to maim or kill oneself; our aim should rather be to make time live, and to enrich our own lives in the process. The point was well made by Prof. Havinghurst in an article on "An Education for Our Times". "We live in a world", according to Prof. Havinghurst, "where leisure has become the property of the common man. And leisure is no longer simply rest, or the absence of work. Leisure is recognised as a time with great potentialities for enjoying life. Education for enjoying leisure may become one of the really pressing concerns of our society. The notion of education for living must be broad and flexible. Much of it will be self-taught through reading, listening and observing. Theatres, Cinema, libraries, journals, museums, radio and television are educative agencies fully as much as organised classes." In later chapters we will consider more closely how libraries, films and the radio can be utilised to provide both conventional learning and education for leisure.

A wise use of leisure can be of immense and many-sided benefit. Leisure can, as Sir Percy Nunn points out, be of real "re-creative" value by tapping fresh sources of energy and enabling the more complex and well-established pattern of life to store up energy for the morrow. By those whose work is of a narrow and monotonous nature, it can be used to exercise those abilities and aptitudes that are starved in their daily work, and to provide a much needed corrective to the excessive specialisation that the 20th century character of work usually demands. This specialisation in modern work demands a corresponding specialisation during the period of preparation with the result that the old Greek ideal of a liberal education is fast being lost sight of; only a proper use of leisure will help to correct the lop-sided and unbalanced nature of modern education, and to form "full men" and not mere experts whose "ignorance" is, according to G.K.C., "the ruin of mankind"! Special provision can also be made during a man's leisure time for play in its fullest sense, for the exercise of man's creative and constructive urges, and for enabling man to formulate for himself a satisfying and satisfactory philosophy of life and action, without which he will be like a ship without a rudder, powerless against the complexities, and the weariness, the fever and the fret of life.

Finally, leisure can be used to make the man, in theory and practice, a good citizen, ready, willing and able to contribute his mite to the welfare of the community in which he lives.

These are some of the many and varied uses to which leisure can be put. Whether it is put to such uses, or merely frittered away in time-wasting and soul-killing pastimes, depends on the previous education and training of a person. If leisure is to be educative in the wide sense of the term, its use or abuse can no more be left to chance. Specific, well-planned education for leisure on liberal and progressive lines is one of the most urgent educational needs of our day. Education must prepare a man not merely to earn a living but to live a full life, and as leisure occupies a very important place in the life of modern man, education for leisure should occupy an equally important place in his total education.

To make a success of education for leisure, wholehearted co-operation between home and school is essential. The drab, ugly, cultureless home, in which the parents and children spend as little of their leisure-time as possible, will effectively nullify anything the school may be able to do in helping children to a creative use of their leisure time. It is no use teaching a child how to read, how to ride as a hobby, or how to engage in other valuable leisure-time pursuits, if the home is lacking in the wherewithal and the atmosphere to enable the child to develop his newly-discovered interests, or if the parents own idea of recreation consists in playing cards, or a visit to the local cinema or coffee house. A creative use of leisure requires effort and activity of mind and body, and without parental encouragement and a suitable milieu a child is likely to take the line of least resistance and choose those purely passive means of entertainment which are so popular in our day, and which are the greatest single obstacle to a truly educative use of leisure. Psychologists have established that children from cultured homes have a tremendous start over those from homes lacking in culture, they also generally get much further, and derive much more pleasure and profit from life.

In ancient Greece the word for school and leisure was identical, and Aristotle was of the opinion that education is a means to leisure. This may be a somewhat extreme point

of view taken at its surface meaning, conceived broadly, it is very largely true. The aim of a liberal education is, in Sir John Adams' words, to develop in the child a complete personality and many-sided interests. Such an education is the best possible preparation for a creative use of leisure. Education must fit a child to lead a full and many-sided life in work and in play; it should develop not the stuffed mind but the inquiring mind, enlarge the understanding, deepen appreciation and widen and enrich the child's range of experiences and interests. The foundation of a child's leisure-time activities are laid in the interests that a school provides him with, not only in the class-room but in the playing field and in the library, or in the craft rooms, the school theatre or the debating room.

What are called "extra-curricular" or student activities form the backbone of the education for leisure given by the school. They should not any longer be treated as desirable extras but be made an integral part of the life and education of the school, and should be as wide and varied as possible to allow for the infinite variety of tastes to be found in any normal school. Freedom of choice is an essential element in true education for leisure; it would be ridiculous to try and force children to pursue this leisure-time pursuit rather than that. Besides games, compulsory and optional team and individual, every school should have a large number of clubs and societies catering for the varied interests of the children. These should be allowed to spring up spontaneously; they should be supervised by teachers who are really interested in their activities, but the main running of them should be in the hands of the children themselves. A wide variety of leisure-time experiences and activities of this sort will help to bring to light hidden talents and abilities, to develop aspects of personality neglected in the class-room, to bring teacher and children together in closer and more informal contact, and to develop in the children life-long interests that will stand them in good stead in adult life when time hangs heavy on their hands. Possible leisure-time activities of a creative, constructive or purely recreative type are too numerous to mention; perhaps the most fruitful are a love of playing games not merely watching them, a taste for reading and writing, for the enjoyment or



making of music, worthwhile hobbies, and, in India especially, an interest in social service of various types.

"The responsibility for ensuring that the new leisure is a source of enjoyment and benefit it ought to be", states the Newsom Report of the Central Advisory Board of Education in England "and not of demoralising boredom is not the schools alone, but clearly education can play a key part."

Education for leisure is the only alternative to a bored generation. And a bored generation is a dangerous one, for the devil finds work for idle hands.

## VITALISING THE SCHOOL LIBRARY

MOST of us during our school days have been inflicted at some time or the other with an essay on "An Hour in the Library" and, drawing largely on our imagination, have made shift to convince the teacher how difficult it was to single out for special mention any particular hour from the large number of 'golden hours' spent in the School Library. But alas how few of us honestly experienced the pleasure, or the profit to be derived from a well-spent hour in a real School Library?

Most schools observe the conventions in providing a room, well or ill-stocked with books, dignified by the name of the School Library. Very often this room is Spartan-like in its furnishing and fittings; sometimes it may be attractively fitted up with book cupboards and cabinets, containing an imposing array and variety of books. But even when adequately housed and equipped, the School Library in the average school exists more for show than for use, being at best an "extracurricular" activity rather than an integral part of school life.

William James, the famous American psychologist, was of the considered opinion that schools develop only about 10-15 per cent of the average child's potentialities. This may not always be true about the general education provided by schools for their pupils, it is generally true about the use most of them make of their School Libraries. The potentialities of the School Library as an instrument of culture, enlightenment and sheer pleasure are almost limitless; very few of these potentialities are in point of fact actualised in the life and working of the average school.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of the School Library or to overemphasise its central position in the life and work of the school, for books are, apart from the work and influence of the teacher, the chief instrument of education. The School Library should be at the heart of the cultural life of a good school, the hub around which much of its

day-to-day activity revolves. The Library should be the centre of the intellectual life of the school, available at all times for reference, for study, or for private reading. It should be a quiet place, an environment that encourages study and reading, furnished and equipped for comfortable use by a number of individuals. The Library should be like an inexhaustible mine in which pupils, under the guidance and inspiration of their teachers, seek the "treasures hidden in the books". But while the School Library should be "a mine of information", it must not be merely that, or it will fail to attract and hold the attention of the majority of school children; it must be a palace of pleasures in which a child can develop his interests, pursue his hobbies and lay an enduring foundation of that love of books which will prove a perennial source of joy, comfort and recreation in his journey through life.

Finally, a good School Library should not merely cater for the present needs and interests of its clients; it should stimulate them to explore hitherto unexplored delights, and lead them into "fresh fields and pastures new".

"The ultimate aim of education", stated Carlyle in his forthright manner, "is to teach students how to read". The definition suffers from certain limitations as a definition of education, but as a statement of the overriding objective of the School Library it could hardly be bettered. To teach "the art of reading" in all its fullness should be the main aim of the School Library. "A love of reading", says Matthew Arnold who was not only a great poet but a far-sighted and successful Inspector of Schools, "well trained and well guided is perhaps the best among the gifts which it is the business of schools to bestow; it is in their power to bestow it, yet it is bestowed in fewer cases than we imagine". The importance of books in our time and age is such that it is the duty of every school to make certain that whatever else a pupil learns, he learns to make the fullest use of books to the extent that his age and ability allows. To provide the right books, to stimulate the child to read them, and to educate him to get the most from his reading, this is the essential and unique function of a School Library.

Thousands of children leave our schools every year, their

heads well stocked with more or less useful information; how many of them really know how to read in Carlyle's sense of the word? Most of them will probably, unless they aspire to passing further examinations, never open a serious book again, and, even if they did, would be at a loss how to "read" it so as to "tear out its heart" and make it a part of themselves. Learning how to read may not be the final goal of education, it is certainly the *sine qua non* without which no true education is possible. Teach a child to read, and you can safely leave him to complete his own education!

In this process of teaching the child to read, the School library can and should play an indispensable part. Its task is twofold—firstly to create in children a taste and an enthusiasm for reading of all types and provide adequate reading material to satisfy this interest once aroused, and secondly to enable the student to get the most benefit from his reading.

Most normal children need little encouragement to develop a zest for reading. Curiosity is one of the chief 'instincts' of the child and once he learns that books are the best means of satisfying his insatiable curiosity and thirst for knowledge not even the dinner bell will drag him away from the wonderland of books. To stimulate and keep alive the child's natural zest for reading, wholehearted co-operation between the School librarian, the teachers, and the parents is necessary. The librarian should stimulate the teachers, and, where possible, the parents to encourage children's love for reading and advise them as to the type of books most suitable for them. He should make them realise that their own attitude to books will exert a paramount influence, for good or for ill, on the child and determine in large measure his approach to books in the school.

In the School Library itself there should be an 'infinite variety' of attractive, well-printed and adequately illustrated books on every conceivable subject to suit all possible tastes and ages. "The School Library should contain books on all subjects and reflect faithfully the class-room, the workshop, the playing field, the hobby corner, the home, the world at large, and not least the realms of gold." Only too often unfortunately while School Libraries cater more or less adequately for the Senior pupils, the infants and juniors are



sadly neglected so that by the time they come to be seniors their book starvation has led to a stunting or atrophy of their innate youthful rest for reading. Another common mistake made by most School Libraries is that they are too 'highbrow' containing only standard Reference Books and classics, which the authorities endeavour to 'impose' on the students by telling them these are the sort of books they ought to read to "improve their minds". De gustibus non est disputandum' may not be a perfect motto for the School Library, but, in planning it, one must realise that while literary taste and appreciation may be gradually cultivated in a person, they can never be imposed on him.

To force the 'Classics' on a child before he is ready for them, and to expect him to enjoy or profit from them, is unwise and uneducational. Many a child's taste for reading has been killed by premature force-feeding with Scott or Dickens, when what he really was interested in was Space Fiction and Detective Stories. The ideal here is not to allow the pupil carte blanche to read only 'penny dreadfuls'—though it is better he read these—(provided they are written in simple, straightforward English, and not American slang!) than nothing at all—but to lead him from these to better things by gradual and imperceptible stages. In this respect the Jesuit principle 'Enter in through the pupil's door, and lead him out through your own' cannot be bettered; the child, for instance, who enjoys stories about pirates or space fiction can easily be led from Batman and Captain Marvel to 'Treasure Island' and 'The War of the Worlds'.

'Recreative reading', says a pamphlet on the School Library published by the British Council, 'no longer implies a concession to childish weakness, but a recognition of the fact that children have a life of their own with needs that must find healthy satisfaction. Teachers who will understand the significance of the children's play are unlikely to underestimate the importance of the recreative side of the School library'. To induce the child to read anything that is not harmful, then to pass on to worthwhile books, both for entertainment and for information, should be the first objective of the School Library, and if it accomplishes even this, it would half justify its existence.

But only half. The 'better half' of its work would remain undone if it stopped there—this is to help and guide the pupils to get full value from their reading, whether it be for pleasure or for profit. When reading for pleasure, the child should be allowed as far as possible to follow his own bent in the beginning, and gradually, mainly by the use of suggestion and imitation his taste should be educated.

More definite guidance and help however must be supplied by the teacher and librarian when the child enters the library seeking knowledge, both in the choice of the right book or books and in their proper use. 'The tyranny of print' exercises an hypnotic influence over both children and adults, and not a few people accept everything that is printed as gospel truth. The development in the child of a critical faculty, to however limited an extent, should be one of the main objects of a good library training—by being encouraged to read rival historians, or several newspapers of rival 'parties' on the same topic, for instance, the child can be made to realise the fallibility of the printed word, and the necessity of taking everything he reads, especially on controversial subjects, with the traditional pinch of salt. Before lending money to a friend the average school boy or girl makes tolerably sure of the bona fides of his debtor; he should be encouraged to establish, with the help of the teacher and the librarian, the bona fides of the author of every book from which he seeks knowledge, wisdom or experience.

To enable the School Library to accomplish its objectives most effectively several conditions should be fulfilled. The American Library Association lays down the following pre-conditions for a good school library. The Libraries should be:

- (i) Large enough to serve the need of the schools and allow expansion as the programme develops and the school grows.
- (ii) Conveniently located for most effective use. This usually means that the library adjoins the classrooms and is easily accessible from as many of them as possible.
- (iii) It should be near the centre of inter-class traffic.
- (iv) It should be comparatively free from outside noise during the school day.

- (v) It should be provided with adequate natural light, with satisfactory window shades, and make due provision for needed artificial light.
- (vi) It should be equipped with adequate shelving for the care of library resources.
- (vii) It should be constructed with acoustical ceiling and noiseless type of floor covering.
- (viii) It should be planned to permit a flexible arrangement of materials and floor covering.
- (ix) It should be near the space needed for allied activities such as audio-visual aids,
- (x) It should be attractive,

The Library in short must be a room made for study, one in which there is not only the right supply and variety of books and catalogues but the right furniture, the right decorations, the right rules of usage, all creating an atmosphere in which it is natural to study. An atmosphere of peace and quiet should prevail though it should not be made a fetish; on occasions children should be allowed to work in pairs, or in groups on specific projects.

Every class should have, as a part of its regular Time Table, periods set aside for library work under the supervision of its Class teacher, some of which may be used for browsing, others for completing definite assignments in the various subjects. Senior pupils especially should be given a series of specific lessons of library usage, it should be an essential part of every senior teacher's work to train his pupils in library techniques—how to use books, consult a Table of Contents and Index, how to make notes, in short, how to do 'private study' by using books as tools for such study. 'There is', states the pamphlet on "The School Library" mentioned before, "a tendency on the part of teacher to underestimate the special difficulties which confront a pupil in starting upon this kind of work. A boy who has never been taught to treat a book as a whole of interrelated parts with a centre or core of meaning, who has had little or no practice in handling an index or a table of contents or a catalogue, who has not begun to learn to find his way about in an Encyclopedia, in a word has not even the most elementary conception of the use of library, has much spade work to do before he

can attempt anything which deserves the name of private study."

It would be ideal if every school could afford the services of a trained librarian, but, in his absence, a teacher who is vitally interested should be entrusted with the job and suitable provision made in his personal time table to enable him to devote an adequate amount of his time to this vitally important task. It will be the Heads and Teacher-librarian's responsibility primarily to see that the library is well equipped and up-to-date, but in this task they should be assisted by a small library Advisory Committee drawn from other members of the Staff and the Senior pupils.

The School Library in most schools in India unfortunately is still an apology for a library, a White Elephant, or a Show piece to impress parents and visitors, like the Drawing Room in many a Victorian English home which the children were never allowed to use and which was only opened on rare occasions!

It is time there was a radical transformation in the attitude of school authorities, and through them of the children, towards it, for, in neglecting the School library, educators are neglecting one of the most useful and potent allies, indeed there is often more real education going on in a good library than in the class-room. A school without a library is like a shell without a kernel, for books are the chief instrument through which teachers accomplish their ends. "Books," according to an eminent educationist "are neither the sole means nor the sole end of education; there have always been other media of communication, and in our own time the alternatives are more numerous and more efficient than ever before, and there are important kinds of experience and forms of skill that must come through other means than the reading of books. But the fact remains that education does not proceed very far without resort to books." Books are the stuff of which School libraries are made, hence all roads in a good school should lead to the School library.



## XXXI

### THE USE OF AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS IN EDUCATION

THE craft of teaching has been described as "to talk a little, to chalk a little, and then to talk a little more." While this description is an obvious over-simplification of the teachers' task, and one more applicable to the 19th century pedagogue than to his 20th century counterpart, who has a wider and richer variety of both "chalk and talk" and activity methods in his armoury, yet it does rivet attention on the vital importance of what are broadly termed "audio-visual aids", those new techniques and auxiliaries which have made the pupil-teacher relationship more meaningful and direct. Talk is still the principal means of communication between a teacher and his pupils, but chalk, and the implied blackboard, an indispensable ally to focus the attention of the pupils on significant points. Indeed a teacher without chalk and blackboard would be like a fish out of water, for without it much of his talk would go in through one ear and out of the other.

The blackboard, or, as it is sometimes called when it is painted green or some other shade, the Chalkboard, and a liberal supply of white and coloured chalks still occupies a privileged position in modern classrooms. The 20th Century teacher no less than his predecessors regards these as indispensable visual aids to good teaching, and effective blackboard work, though a dying art, is rightly rated one of the distinguishing marks of a good teacher. But, besides these age-old and time-honoured aids, modern science and progressive educational theory and practice have placed in the hands of the teacher of today such a variety of other useful 'audio-visual aids' to assist him to make his teaching more economic, (it is estimated that 40 per cent of the instructional time is saved by their use), and effective, that there is a veritable *embarass de riches*. Maps, charts, filmstrips, films (silent and talking), models (static and working), the Radio and Television, Tape Recorders and Teaching Machines—

these are among the most modern, most commonly used, and the most effective audio-visual aids found in schools and classrooms in progressive countries like the U.K., U.S.A., and U.S.S.R., many of which have also found their way into good schools in this country. There is little doubt that the progressive teacher who knows how to make the best use of such modern aids to good teaching will make a much greater and more lasting impact on his pupils than his diehard colleague who regards these new teaching devices with indifference, suspicion and often positive hostility.

The psychological and educational justification of audio-visual aids will become apparent when we consider their *raison d'être* in the modern school.

Audio-visual aids are means of imparting instruction based on the maxim, "what we hear we forget, what we see we remember, what we do, we understand. Under this description is included "all material used in the classroom or in other teaching situations to facilitate the understanding of the written and spoken word" such aids appeal to the mind primarily through the visual" and auditory organs. Psychologists hold the 85 per cent—90 per cent of learning starts from here, the greater part of what goes on in the mind enters in through the senses which are therefore the gateways to knowledge and to creative thinking based on it. We all learn largely through our senses; some learn better through one or the other sense; all learn better if more than one sense is used at the time of learning. A good teacher will therefore endeavour to enter into the child's mind through all his senses; not only of the sense of hearing or the sense of sight, and if more than one sense is assailed at one and the same time, a child's learning is bound to be speedier, richer and more enduring.

Audio-visual aids are powerful means of attracting and holding the interest and attention of pupils, they also help them to retain information better and to form and retain correct visual images. "Operating as they do" says a UNESCO Report on Audio-Visual aids, "on a middle level between the most abstract and most direct, they make it easier for the student to ground his knowledge of words and concepts in real and memorable experience, and to generalise and apply what he learns. They make for a change of pace in class-room

activities and thus combat fatigue and boredom. With their great impact they can extend the students' experience far beyond length of his own travels. Thus, for example, a subject such as Geography attains a new reality when the student can 'see' some of the countries and people he is studying, and the plays of Shakespeare take on a new significance when the student can 'attend' an expert performance, even though it is on a film or television."

Finally, modern mass media of communication such as the Film, Radio and T. V. have become so much a part of the child's world outside the class-room and exercise such an immediate and enduring hold on the child's interest and attention, that to fail to harness them as a means to more effective teaching and learning would be extremely short-sighted, to say the least.

Valuable, however, as audio-visual aids are to the teacher, it must be emphasised that they are 'aids' or instruments, and that they will only be fully effective in the hands of a teacher who knows how to handle them so as to extract from them their maximum utility. Audio-visual aids cannot take the place of a teacher, (if they do, such teachers deserve to be replaced!), but effectively used they can help the teacher to a much better job of work. They are in short invaluable means to and complements of good teaching. The crux of the problem therefore is not that they might replace the teacher, but to find an effective combination of teacher and media.

Audio-visual aids, like most modern techniques in teaching, are a double-edged weapon which need to be carefully handled if they are not to do more harm than good. Certain preconditions should be fulfilled if they are not to become a mere teaching gimmick to catch the momentary attention of pupils, but of real and lasting value.

The first condition is that teachers should be quite clear as to their objective in using a particular aid, and select that aid which will enable them to realise this objective most effectively and economically. There is no ideal audio-visual aid. Each has its strong points and its limitations. This means, *inter alia*, that teachers should be aware of the strengths and limitations of the different aids available so as to be able to make an informed choice between their competing claims. It

also means that the teacher must carefully plan the actual use of the aid selected in such a way so as to capitalise on its strengths, and minimise its weaknesses. In teaching the parts of a flower, for instance, a chart or a film strip may be more effective than a moving film, but if the growth of a flower from a seed is to be taught, a film that shows the actual process of growth would be very much more effective than a filmstrip or chart. Again, if a high degree of immediacy and realism is necessary, T.V. is a more effective medium than Radio, but if an appeal has to be made primarily to the imagination, the Radio is definitely more effective.

Secondly, in the light of his objective, a teacher should decide whether the selected audio-visual material or tool is to be part of a lesson, or form the substance of a complete lesson; whether it is to be used as an illustration and summary of a topic already taught in the class-room, or an introduction to a new topic. In short, whether they form a complete lesson or a part of a lesson, the use of audio-visual aids must be as carefully planned as in an ordinary classroom lesson with adequate scope for preparation, presentation, and follow-up. To merely show an educational film to a class, for instance, with the students in the role of a captive, passive audience would achieve little. The film must be previewed by the teacher who should then prepare the class for its showing by stirring up their interest and stimulating their curiosity about it. After the film has been shown, perhaps more than once, there should be a follow-up in which, through a planned series of questions and answers, the teacher ensures the students have correctly grasped what the film is meant to teach and fill, in the gaps that exist in even the best educational film.

Other desirable conditions are that the audio-visual material must be suitable to the age and standard of achievement of the pupils for whom it is used; that it should be related intimately to syllabus or topic under study; that it should be used at the right time, and that a proper atmosphere and conditions are created for it to make the desired impact on the students.

If the above conditions are fulfilled, audio-visual aids will be the teachers' best friend, if they are not, they may be an obstacle rather than a help to good teaching.



Some audio-visual aids for use in schools, like Radios, Tape Recorders, and Film Projectors and films are expensive, and may be beyond the means of ordinary schools in India unless liberal Government grants are made available. Others, like maps, charts, models etc. are within the means of schools in this country, and even in India there is quite a wide choice of such aids available for the teaching of all subjects, but especially for the Science subjects. While such aids are valuable, yet it would be much more beneficial, if whenever possible students under guidance could make their own audio-visual aids. Care should be taken when this is done to ensure that audio-visual aids made by the pupils are not mere carbon copies of maps, charts and models etc. provided by commercial firms. Rather they should be as original as possible, and whenever possible they should take the form of a concrete application of knowledge and experience acquired and assimilated in the class-rooms or through a planned project or educational excursion. The audio-visual aids prepared by children may not, and indeed need not have a commercial finish, still they will be greater educational value and significance to them as they will be learning by doing, and they will almost certainly be more interested in material made by themselves than in purchased material.

Exaggerated claims have from time to time been made that this or that new audio-visual aid, like the Radio, T.V., or Teaching Machines will virtually render the teacher superfluous by taking his place in the class-room and doing his job in a more interesting and effective manner. Experience, however, has always shown that no mere instrument can replace the vital human element that a teacher represents, and that even the best visual aids can only be really effective in the hands of a skilled teacher. Audio-visual aids can enrich and extend the abilities and resources of the teaching staff, they are supplements to good teaching, not substitutes for it. There is, however, no doubt that good teaching can be made much better by an effective use of audio-visual aids in the manner briefly outlined in this chapter. And, in some cases, as when a Master Teacher teaches a course on films or radio or T.V., they can project the influence of

a good teacher over many schools and into many more pupils than he actually teaches.

The most challenging task of any teacher is to impart interest, vitality and significance to his teaching by linking text-books and class-room lessons with the natural and social environment of the child, and endeavouring to bridge the gap that exists between schools and the wider world outside. This gap between school and life can probably best be bridged through a carefully planned, judicious and imaginative use of audio-visual aids which will bring the class-room to life and link it with the real world outside. And, unless this gap is bridged, little effective or enduring education in the real sense of the word is possible.

## XXXII

### FILMS AND EDUCATION

"KNOWLEDGE" wrote the 18th century English philosopher Thomas Hobbes, "comes more readily through the eye than through the ear." A true understanding of this platitude and its practical application to the class-room and lecture hall is a comparatively recent phenomenon in the realm of educational theory and practice. The commercial Cinema, from a humble beginning in the late 19th century, has grown into one of the most ubiquitous, potent and pervasive media of mass communication of our age, exerting its powerful influence, for good and for evil, over millions of men, women and children all over the world, an influence that has been rendered doubly effective by the simultaneous impact of talking pictures on the eye and on the ear. Films as a medium of pleasure and entertainment are a well-established fact of modern life; it is only recently that their tremendous possibilities as a medium of education have been realised, and, wholly or partially, developed in progressive countries all over the world.

The realisation of the possibilities of the moving picture as an instrument of rapid and effective education first became apparent during the World War I when the need arose to provide rapid courses of training in the techniques of modern warfare to hastily drafted conscripts in England and the U.S.A. During the inter-war period some of the knowledge and experience acquired in the use of films as a means of instruction was carried into the schools by army trained schoolmasters, and Film projectors became a part of standard school equipment in many schools in the U.K. and U.S.A. The effectiveness of this new medium of education of school for children and adults was, however, better realised and exploited by the Fascist countries than the democracies, and Hitler candidly said that his most effective secret weapon was the 6000 Film Projectors, and the propaganda with which the

Nazi dominated Ministry of Education flooded the schools and Adult Education Centres in pre-war Germany.

The democracies, though more lethargic, were not, however, entirely blind to the value of film education. A great stimulus to their activities in this direction was given by the outbreak of World War II when Britain, and more especially the U.S.A. made rapid strides forward in the effective use of the film as a means of rapid mass education. As a result of widespread tests conducted by the American Army and Navy authorities it was found that education through films was not only more interesting but more effective and more permanent; appreciably more was learnt and retained through film education than through oral education. "Estimates of time saved in training technicians for war industry and in the training of military personnel," stated an American Report, "vary from 25-75 per cent. Furthermore, long retention of content and meaning is improved, in a measure great enough to be effective." These results have been confirmed by post-war research on this subject in many American Universities. A Harvard research discovered that by using films in education, 20.5 per cent more is learnt and 30.8 per cent remembered; Yale and Columbia put the figures much higher, and their general consensus of opinion regarding the greater effectiveness of the films over the oral lesson has been checked, rechecked and ratified by subsequent research in other countries.

These impressive findings gave a great impetus to the use of the film as the teachers' new ally in the schools, and progressive schools in most countries began to achieve notable results by its adoption as a normal part of school education. In the U.S.A. enthusiasm for "teaching the G. I. way" became the rage and, in the short time, the number of projectors in use in schools and other institutions touched the 60000 mark.

In the first flush of enthusiasm extravagant claims were made that the films would soon replace the teachers and there was much misplaced optimism and wastage; since then there has been a moderation of the first, fine careless rapture, and much progress has been recorded in the attempt to organise and make the most effective use of this new medium of education. All activities in this direction are co-ordinated, orga-



nised and directed by the American Film Council which works in co-operation with local bodies and school authorities to arrange for the right films to be made and shown to the right people at the right time, to help schools to provide their own film equipment, and to train teachers to make the best possible use of the films. In England, too, there has been a marked revival of enthusiasm for the film as a means of education. A National Committee of Visual Aids, representative of all interested parties, has been set up to plan broad lines of policy while a special expert Technical Committee of Visual Aids at the Ministry of Education advises schools and other bodies on the preparation, production and use of films, film-strips etc. The actual preparation and distribution of educational films through the country is supervised by the National Foundation of Film Education which works through special Film Libraries, and also by providing films to ordinary local libraries.

In India the movement towards education through films is in its infancy, but the setting up of a special Technical Section at the Central Ministry of Education at Delhi to lay down policy, the Central Film Library to make and distribute films, and the National Institute of Audio-Visual Education to conduct research and to train teachers in the proper use of films are steps in the right direction. And many of the states have made a good beginning towards effective use of the film, not only in the schools but also in the mass education of adults.

In order that films should be most effectively used in the schools, it is necessary to be clearly aware of what they are capable of doing and what they are not, what are their peculiar strengths and weaknesses, and what means should be adopted to supplement and complete the work they begin. Films are an excellent supplement to the class-room lesson, and form one of the most effective teaching devices at the disposal of a modern schoolmaster. They can be used for many purposes; to provide a background for a lesson or to illustrate it, to rouse interest in or stimulate discussion about a particular subject, to shape attitudes and to promote activity. The film is more vivid than the spoken word, and can bring dead subjects to life. The history of the past can be made to live

once again, and living contact can be established with the life and work of people in distant lands.

The uniqueness of the film as a means of education, however, lies mainly in dramatic appeal and in its dynamic qualities; it is most effective when portraying living and moving subjects. A special committee of the British Association for the Advancement of Science which sat during the war to plan post-war University development made a strong plea for the extended use of the film to supplement and complete the oral lesson or the lecture; and, in support of this plea it underlined the dynamic quality of films. "By slow motion or speeded photography," the Committee wrote, "it is able to show students things which in their normal study they would never see for themselves. In the case of medicine, the lens of the camera can be in the position of the eye of the most privileged observer. When it is not possible to take students to the object, the object can be brought to the students, even if it is to be at the opposite end of the country or indeed of the world"—which is an admirable highlighting of the unique advantages of this new teaching aid.

While these advantages are undoubtedly great, one must be careful not to exaggerate them unduly. The film is an excellent aid to the teacher, not a substitute for him; it can supplement and complete his work, not replace him. The personality of the teacher will always remain the most vital element in education, for character, as Goethe emphasised, shapes character. Films are a means to more enjoyable and effective learning; they do not provide a royal road to it, for the necessary intellectual hard work of memorising, assimilation, understanding and retention will still have to be done by the student. And, finally, films will not educate of and by themselves; they must be properly planned, organised and used, else the net results will be poor.

The technique of handling films is vitally important. Films should not be shown haphazardly on a wide variety of topics, and left to do their best—or their worst! They should be carefully chosen to fit the age range of the viewers and the course and the curriculum being studied at any particular school, and should be shown at the psychological moment when they are likely to achieve the maximum effect. Teachers

should not only be thoroughly familiar with the contents of every film they show, so that they are able to comment intelligently on it and direct special attention to parts which call for it. Films should not be whisked through so fast that the children only gather a series of vague and chaotic impressions; they should be unreeled slowly, stopped at important points, and repeated a second or a third time if necessary. Finally, the actual showing should not only be preceded by a prepared preparatory talk, but it must be followed by a recapitulatory lesson, involving guided discussion and follow-up work. This post-showing discussion and work is the most vital and effective part of a film lesson, a film show may degenerate into a mere entertainment without it and do more harm than good.

An oral lesson, followed by the film with an appropriate but brief commentary, followed by a class discussion and set written work—this is the best procedure by means of which to analyse the film into its component parts and later to build up a new synthesis in the children's minds. Books, stills, charts and other supplementary material are an essential help towards getting the maximum value from it. The Ministry of Education in England has recently experimented very successfully with travelling "Visual Units" composed of films, books and pamphlets on the subjects of the films, and attractive Wall-displays of photographs, drawings, statistics, charts etc. Knowledge of the best way in which to use the film is daily accumulating, but much research needs to be done yet on this subject, and especially on the right type of films for children of different ages for the same film is obviously not equally suitable for all age-groups.

The film has come to stay in the schools. But it must not be confined to them, for it is rich in educational possibilities for the adult too. Indeed, considering its twin appeal to eye and ear, its emotional impact and its tremendous power of suggestion, its immediate and lasting effect on illiterates or those to whom thinking or reading do not come easily, it is probably the most effective means of adult education in existence. The camera can be as effective a means of mass education as it is at the present of mass entertainment; it can be used to teach the masses, especially in backward countries

where the majority can neither read nor write, what they ought to do and know, to give them ideas and ideals, to educate them about one another and their needs about health and citizenship, about their country and other countries, and about current and world affairs.

Great use is being made of the film in European countries and in the U.S.A. in the campaign for adult education. In England trained projectionists travel around regularly in specially equipped vans on definite circuits showing their films in Village Halls or Community Centres all over the countryside; their urban counterparts use films, shown during the lunch interval, to bring home to the factory workers the importance of the work and how they can best promote their industrial health and avoid dangerous accidents. These travelling Film Salesmen not only exhibit their films, but "sell" them by starting and guiding discussion and encouraging their audience to undertake appropriate action on the basis of the information disseminated in the film. They also carry around plenty of supplementary material in the way of books, pamphlets, illustrative photographs, wall-charts and pictures with which to stimulate and guide discussion and crystallise information and discussion in action. Local Councils, which are the Education Authorities in England, have also started local Film Councils made up of representatives of schools, commercial firms, and other interested bodies, which co-ordinate and organize film education in their area and provide projectors and experts for those institutions which need them.

The use of films for the education of school children and adults has made rapid strides forward. But much of the good work done by the makers and distributors of educational films is negated by the commercial Cinema with its emphasis on the sensational appeal to the eye and ear and the emotions. This excessive sensationalism and sentimentality soon destroys all refinement of taste with the result that children and adults are quickly bored by even first-rate educational films.

The commercial Cinema in India, whether one likes it or not, rapidly has become, for good or for evil, the principal entertainment and educative agency for the mass of the people. There is therefore an urgent need for wholehearted



and friendly cooperation between the film Moghuls and Educational authorities to ensure that, together with specially "entertainment" and educational films, a large number of films, broadly educational in character, suitable for children and for adults, (such as film versions of famous classics, lives of great scientists, sages and saints etc.,) are made, which are at once entertaining, instructive and inspiring. Only when educationists and film producers co-operate, instead of ignoring, despising or fighting one other, will films be able completely to fulfil their tremendous possibilities, as, after the teacher, the most vivid and effective medium of mass education of our era.

It has been objected that films kill all desire for reading or hard study, and encourage mental laziness. A wrong or excessive use of films may do so, but definite proof exists that, wisely used, the film stimulates interest, mental alertness and concentration, encourages reading and investigation, enriches and extends personal experience, shapes the outlooks and attitudes, and correlates the work of the school with the life of the community and the world outside its walls—all of which helps to make the school a much more real and exciting place, and learning less of a drudgery and more of an adventure. Films will never, and must not attempt to take the place of the teacher or of first-hand observation and experience of life; but moderately, wisely, and skilfully used, they can widen the range of the students' experience and prove the teachers' best friend.

## EDUCATION BY RADIO

It has long been a well-established axiom that education consists not merely of knowledge, rigidly compartmentalised into subjects, but of experience; "the curriculum", stated the Hadow Report in words that have become famous, "should be thought of in terms of activity and experience rather than of facts to be learnt, and knowledge to be acquired". Education, as John Dewey was never tired of insisting, is not merely a preparation for life, it is life, and as such it must consist not merely in the communication of knowledge, ideas, ideals and attitudes that will be of use to the child in later life, but in giving him "significant experiences" that have a present value and are worthwhile in themselves.

In the imparting of both these types of education, the teacher in the past had to rely mainly on his own skill and ingenuity; recently, however, Science has come to his aid in putting new resources at his disposal to help him to achieve his object more completely. The "New Media" such as the Film, T. V. and the Radio are being increasingly pressed into the service of the teacher in progressive countries, and are yielding rich returns not only in enlivening the monotony of the daily diet of oral lessons, but in the effective and more enjoyable learning and retention they make possible. "It is important", says an authority, "to remember the strictly limited field in which education can operate. It could not, if it would, destroy the mass media of communication. It ought not want to do so. The high standard of technical efficiency that modern methods have developed have brought experiences of the greatest value to many whose lives were almost pitifully empty of anything but the daily task of keeping alive. They have enlarged the imagination and quickened the horizon of millions. They have quickened many who were virtually dead. They give education new possibilities. But just because they are so powerful they have to be treated with the discrimination that only education can give."

The Radio has for long been one of the best established and most popular means of mass entertainment; it is only in the past quarter century that its possibilities as a medium of mass education have been realised, and, to some extent, exploited. Its advantages are obvious. Education to be valuable must maintain a close contact with the life of the educated; the Radio has not only become part of the daily lives of most children, but it is together with the Cinema probably, for good or for ill, the greatest educative influence on their lives and thinking, after their parents and teachers. To ignore the Radio as a means of education would be, in view of this fact, little short of fatal; it can and must be used not merely to counteract the dangerous effects of "Commercial radio" but as one of the most effective educational techniques open to the teacher of today.

The Radio as an educational medium can serve three main purposes: it can supply information that would otherwise be difficult to get i.e. of current events; it can provide material for appreciation i.e. music, and it can add interest to and enliven the school work. School broadcasts can be used as a means of imparting knowledge, of stimulating interest, of providing children with experiences they would not otherwise have had by bringing them into contact with people, places, things and ideas distant from them; it can provide a link between the home, the school, the community, and the larger world outside by "bringing the world into the school, and taking the school (in imagination) out into the world." It can bring to the class the voices and experiences of great explorers, artists, scientists etc. and the music and poetry of great orchestras or poets; it can bring the past to life again, and make literature alive and full of a new beauty and significance.

Recent psychological research in the U.K. and the U.S.A. has also brought to light another great advantage of the Radio as a means of education, namely that the non-academic child and the child of average or below average intelligence learns more from the spoken than the written word. The "oral lesson" given by the teacher has so far been the chief medium of the spoken word, and, while it has its obvious advantages over a broadcast, there are some ways in which the Radio is more effective.

The teacher relies mainly on his voice, the Radio can use sound effects, the services of experts skilled in "interpretative delivery", and dramatisation and actuality to clothe the words used with flesh and blood and vitality. Learning and retention depend on the strength of the child's interest and attention; broadcasts have in many cases been found to hold, and keep the attention of the children better than oral lessons, because they are not mere lessons but possess the exciting quality of something really happening, and as such are often able to impart facts, attitudes and interests even more effectively than the teachers. In many instances also the Radio can provide experiences—such as great music, or interviews with famous men—which no teacher can provide and which would be lost without it. In addition school broadcasts can and do assist teachers, first of all in collecting information which he could not otherwise obtain due to lack of time and resources, secondly in the technique of preparing and presenting well-prepared lessons which can often serve as a standard, and thirdly in supporting relatively untrained teachers in fields such as music and the teaching of second languages in which correct methods are desirable. The Radio is thus a necessary supplement to the oral lessons given by the teachers for they make these lessons rich in first-hand experience and link the text-books with the actual world in which the student lives.

The Radio is rich in educational possibilities, it is no royal road to learning or panacea for all the ills which a student's or a teacher's flesh is heir to, for like every teaching device it has its drawbacks and limitations. The Radio broadcast is an invaluable method of rousing interest in a subject, it does not dispense the listener from the "hard labour" of learning and consolidation; as such it is merely a supplement to the work of the teacher, not a substitute for him. The Radio can be used for direct "lessons", but these can be much better given by the teacher, the main task of the radio is to convey "experiences" which the teacher can build on. "Education", says A. N. Whitehead, "must essentially be setting in order a ferment already stirring in the mind." The Radio can rouse an intellectual and imaginative ferment in the mind of the child, but only the teacher can give to this ferment "a local



habitation and a name" and impose order on the chaotic stirrings of mind and heart. The "disembodied voice" that issues from a box can never have quite the same human quality as the ubiquitous teacher; the absence of living contact between teacher and taught prevents that two-way traffic of ideas, that question and answer, difficulty and explanation that are the life's blood of a good lesson. Broadcast lessons, moreover are planned for mass consumption and so inevitably tend to be "standardised" to fit a non-existent "average child," adaptations and modifications by the teacher to make them fit a particular class or a particular individual will be essential, otherwise some may get a great deal from a broadcast but others may get very little. What children actually get from a Radio lesson or experience indeed depends largely on the teacher's initiative, skill and experience. It is the good teacher building on the broadcast experience in the light of his first-hand knowledge of his pupils who makes it possible for a single broadcast to contribute to the need of so many listeners.

Despite its powerful effect on stimulating the imagination and learning of pupils, the Radio is, when all is said and done, an instrument, not a human being, and because it lacks the personality of a living, breathing human adult, it can never replace the good teacher. The teacher's personality, his physical presence in the class, his awareness of the psychological climate at a particular time, his assessment of the students' store of knowledge and background are highly important factors which enable him to adjust his approach and methodology to the teachings of different subjects.

Hence with the exception of those broadcasts whose sole subject is to convey a meaningful and worthwhile human experience of great music or poetry or literature, every Radio "lesson" thus depends for its success on the way it is handled by the teacher. The broadcast as it were provides the skeleton, it is the teacher who must clothe it with vitality and adapt it to suit the needs and abilities of every child in his class. A successful Radio "lesson" demands very careful forethought and planning on the part of the teacher, before, during and after the actual broadcast. He must prepare the correct 'atmosphere' by ensuring all the conditions of good

listening—silence, freedom from interruption, availability of an illustration, maps that may be required etc.. He should have a rough idea of the subject matter of the broadcast, and prepare the ground for it by stimulating some curiosity in the children before the actual broadcast. He must train himself and the children to listen actively rather than passively, so that the knowledge or experience given may make a deep impression and may be easily recalled later. Some people advocate the making of notes or summaries by the teacher or children while the 'lesson' is in progress, but researches by Prof. Schonell of Birmingham University have established fairly conclusively that children benefit much less from dividing their attention in this manner than they do when they give the "lesson" their wholehearted and undivided attention. The teacher must, however, make mental notes of "talking points" in the broadcast for his 'follow-up' which should be both a rounding off of the broadcast, a gathering together of threads and clearing up of difficulties, and a starting point for excursions into "fresh fields and pastures new".

Much skill is therefore needed by the teacher who with his class is at the "receiving end" of the broadcast lesson if it is to achieve its maximum effect on every individual listener. Even greater skill is needed on the part of the person at the "sending end" who plans and transmits the broadcast. The expert who plans, writes, and transmits broadcasts to schools must combine accurate knowledge and experience of the interests, aptitudes and abilities of children of various age groups, a thorough knowledge of his subject, and expert knowledge of his medium—the Radio, and be able to blend the three together in such a way as to produce a harmonious and total effect on the children listening in. To achieve this he should be generally an experienced teacher, specially trained in radio technique, and he should maintain constant contact with the schools to know the actual effect of his broadcasts on children and how far they are fitting into the pattern of life and work at the school. Many a perfect broadcast "lesson" on paper is a flop in the class-room, hence accurate and widespread reports from the schools concerning the effect of individual broadcasts on their pupils are necessary to ensure that the broadcast "lesson" fits the children and not

vice versa. Broadcasting for schools, in short, will be really successful if there is a real partnership and wholehearted co-operation between the schools and the Broadcasting authorities, the interaction and two-way traffic of ideas and information between should be continuous and each must supply what the other lacks.

No system of School Broadcasting is likely to achieve success if the communication moves in one direction only. Thus in the U.K. and the U.S.A., and the other countries where School Broadcasts are a regular feature of the educational programme, educational panels consisting of teachers and the broadcasting experts help in planning and producing lessons. Further teachers and others are encouraged to send in constructive comments and criticisms of actual broadcasts, and sample surveys of the effectiveness of certain programmes at the listeners' end are carried out in selected schools. By these means a picture of the effectiveness of School Broadcasts can be obtained, and suitable adjustments made. Continuous contacts with schools is thus vital both in order to solve teachers' difficulties in regard to School Broadcasts and to enable the most efficient type of School Broadcasts to be given. A well-planned series of educational broadcasts can be of immeasurable benefit in bringing new life into the schools in vitalising the syllabus, in suggesting and pioneering new methods, in providing a stimulus and challenge to teachers who have got into a rut, and in enlivening and enriching the daily life and work of teachers and pupils.

The Radio is one of the most valuable teaching aids at the disposal of the modern teacher. But, if it is to realise its full potentialities as an educational medium, those who use it must be alive to its real strength and weakness. Education by Radio will be most effective if it does not try and do what the teacher can do much better i.e. serve as a channel of instruction or information, though it may be used to do this on some occasions. The Radio is of most use in stimulating and widening the children's interests, in shaping their attitudes, in enriching their emotional and imaginative life, and in extending and vivifying their very limited experience of the world and of their fellows outside the school walls. If it confines its activities mainly to these fields, good teachers will be only

too willing to welcome the Radio into their class-rooms and to hail its as one of the many effective teaching aids which science has placed at their disposal to help them in their difficult and exacting vocation.



## THE TEACHER-CENTRED SCHOOL

THE 20th century has been called the "Century of the Child", and "child-centred education" is the slogan of the day. The modern paedocentric movement, which has succeeded in putting the child in the centre of the educational picture, is a healthy reaction against the 19th century equation of education with "instruction in the elements of the 3R's". But, like all reactions, it has gone to extremes, for, parallel with the tendency to put the child in the foreground, has been the complementary tendency to push the teacher into the background! Indeed, ardent child worshippers have set about, with a zest that outruns discretion, to 'emancipate' the child from the 'tyranny' of the teacher and to relegate the latter to the role of a mere 'Observer' of the child's natural and uninhibited development. Hence in ultra-progressive, Child-centred schools, teachers tend to take a back seat, and even in ordinary run-of-the-mill schools, Managers and Heads tend to devote the major share of their time, energy and money to catering for the needs, abilities and aptitudes of the children to the neglect, and often at the expense of the teachers.

The growing tendency on the part of school administrators to make the child the hub around which the school revolves to the detriment of the staff is, in the writer's considered opinion, shortsighted and misconceived. It is indisputable that, from the point of view of the teacher, a school, if it is to be a good school, should be child-centred for schools exist for children and not to give employment to teachers. But from the point of view of the administration, it would be much more beneficial and realistic if the authorities thought and planned in terms of a teacher-centred school for the teacher's function in a school is indispensable to the promotion of the development of the children, and it is only in a school which is administratively "teacher-centred" that true child-centred education is likely to result.

"We are convinced" stated the Mudaliar report, "that the most important factor in the contemplated reconstruction is the teacher, his personal qualities, his educational qualifications, his professional training, and the place he occupies in the school and in the community". This is putting teachers in our schools where they rightfully belong, in the centre of the educational picture. "It is not enough," says a UNESCO Report on the Status of the Teaching Profession "to build schools, Universities, laboratories and methods, and to make forecasts and plans on a medium or long term basis. Every effort will be a vain one if the teaching profession does not consist of persons highly qualified, well trained, and satisfied with their status."

It is interesting and heartening to note that this viewpoint is wholeheartedly endorsed by the National Education Commission (1964-66) in its recent report. "Of all the different factors that influence the quality of education and its contribution to national development," states the Commission, "the quality, competence and character of teachers are undoubtedly the most significant. Nothing is more important than securing a sufficient supply of high quality recruits to the teaching profession, providing them with the best possible professional preparation, and creating satisfactory conditions of work."

This sage advice should be assimilated and implemented, not only by Central and State Governments but also by the Managements of individual schools. A good and forward-looking school administration should, therefore, make the staff the focus both of its short-term and long-term planning; it should bend all its energies and utilise all its time and resources to attract, build up and retain a good, loyal, stable and progressive staff, for it is on the calibre of the staff that the calibre of the school will depend. If Managers and Heads spent half as much of their time and energy on evolving and implementing a sound, progressive and comprehensive staff policy that would achieve the above objective, as they spend on interviewing parents, raising money for new buildings and furniture and equipment, and on 'local politics', we would have fewer cases of teacher frustration erupting into strikes, and considerably much less student indiscipline.

Unhappy, frustrated, indisciplined teachers will inevitably spawn unhappy, frustrated, indisciplined students, for even if they are conscientious enough not to go on strike, or to air their grievances and frustrations in front of their pupils, their discontent will be reflected unconsciously in everything they do or say. What a teacher is, in the last analysis, is what he teaches. If the administration of a school is not adequately teacher-centred, it will inevitably drive teachers to be more and more self-centred, and the ideal of child-centred education will recede more and more into the penumbra of the teachers' conscious and sub-conscious life and work, with disastrous effects on the quality and effectiveness of their teaching.

Child-centred education is, then, a function of a teacher-centred school administration. What are or should be the objectives of such an administration?

In these days of run-away inflation, spiralling prices and a materialistic climate of opinion outside the schools, which judges a man's worth by the size of pay cheque and bank balance, socio-economic factors tend to overshadow all others. A teacher-centred administration will take due note of this inescapable fact; it will endeavour to ensure that teaching is made as professionally rewarding and financially attractive as possible, and economise on everything except its teachers for poor teachers make for poor teaching. The ideal should be: How much can we give and do for our teachers, not how little can we get away with! Hence both Governments and School managements should be prepared to give till it hurts, if they are to attract and keep good teachers.

The Kothari Commission has no illusions on this point, (and School authorities should have none), that if talented men and women teachers are to be forthcoming in sufficient numbers to education in India at all levels, "it is necessary to make an intensive and continuous effort to raise the economic, social and professional status of teachers in order to attract young men and women of ability to the profession, and to retain them in it as dedicated, enthusiastic and contented teachers." While the Commission is aware that a small minority of first-rate people will always be attracted to teaching from higher motives of love of teaching and

children or the desire for social service, yet it stresses "there can be no doubt, however, that the provision of adequate remuneration, opportunities for professional advancement, and favourable conditions of work are the major programmes that will help to feed back into the teaching profession a suitable proportion of the best boys and girls from the schools."

The economic advantages that a teacher-centred school administration should offer to its staff should not only consist of an attractive salary scale, but also of a dearness allowance linked to the current cost of living index, and "fringe benefits" such as free housing, subsidised lodging, free education for teachers' children, and, if considered necessary, a system of group "private tuition" regulated by the school administration from which all teachers benefit equally, and not only an unscrupulous few.

It is obvious that the economic attractions of teaching can never vie with those in the commercial world. Most teachers worth the name recognise this fact of life, and have not taken to teaching to get rich quick! But at the least they are entitled to a living, family wage, and to adequate security in service and in their old age if they are to give of their best. A teacher-centred administration will, with or without Government assistance, do everything in its power to provide its teachers with these essential minima.

A radical improvement in the economic attractiveness of teaching will do much to attract and retain in service good teachers. But a good teacher does not live by bread alone! A teacher-centred administration would do well to take this often overlooked fact into consideration when planning suitable conditions of service for its teachers.

It is often stated as an educational axiom that the "Headmaster is the school". A teacher-centred administration will realise that this is at best a dangerous half-truth. It is true that upon the Head of a school rests the chief responsibility of organising and administering the school, and the tone and efficiency of a school depends largely on the personality and professional competence of the Head. But, living as we do in a radically democratic climate of opinion, it is important for the administration of a school, which includes the Head, to realise, and to act upon the realisation that Heads



are, (to give them their full title), "Head teachers", *primus inter pares*; that many of their teachers are as well qualified, as experienced, and as capable as they are, and hence that they must give their staff members a much more positive say in matters of school policy. There still tends to be too much paternalism and maternalism in Head-staff relationships in most schools in India; the administration is still very much a One-Man show in which all major, and sometimes even minor decisions are made without staff consultation, unilaterally by the Head and handed down to the staff. Theirs not to reason why, theirs but to carry out orders, good, bad or indifferent! Many good and devoted teachers, who have the best interests of their schools really at heart, suffer from deep frustration on this account, and do not give to their institution all that they are capable of giving.

This authoritarian line-and-staff relationship between the Heads and teachers needs to be democratised. Teachers need to be given a much bigger stake in the actual day-to-day administration of the school, and Heads should strive to establish real rapport with their staff, through informal and formal, individual and group consultations and conferences. In this connection frequent staff meetings of the whole staff or sections of the staff, at which there is full and frank discussion and a two-way traffic of ideas on all matters pertaining to the welfare of the school, and at which Heads and teachers can educate one another about new developments in educational theory and practice, are as indispensable means of promoting healthy and creative Head-staff relationships, and of welding the staff into a real team under the leadership of the Head.

In a recent address to the WCTOP Sir Ronald Gould, its President, laid down five conditions for getting and retaining good teachers which, in the author's opinion, could well serve as a sound basis for a teacher-centred school administration:

"Thou shalt educate thy teachers well"

"Thou shalt pay thy teachers a reasonable rate"

"Thou shalt encourage thy teachers to teach"

"Thou shalt trust thy teachers"

These four "commandments" would probably be accepted

in theory, if not implemented in practice, by most Heads and administrators.

The fifth commandment, which is more controversial, reads thus "Thou shalt treat thy teachers, not as bondsmen but as partners." Elaborating on this commandment, Sir Ronald, than whom few experts are better qualified to speak with authority, states categorically. "No quality education is possible without good personal relationships. When teachers are treated as allies and colleagues, are consulted and given responsibility, they respond and better teaching results. If, on the other hand, teachers are given no effective power, the truth of Adlai Stevenson's dictum becomes apparent. Power corrupts, but lack of power corrupts absolutely. The teachers become resentful and irresponsible, and the children suffer." A teacher-centred school administration will take due note of this grave warning. The royal road to a child-centred education can only be through teacher-centred schools. The sooner this truth is recognised, accepted and acted upon, along the broad lines sketched in this chapter, the better will be the quality of education imparted in our schools in India.

## THE TEACHER IN THE MODERN WORLD

THE precise nature of the modern world defies analysis, not only because of its complexity but because it is in a state of such constant and rapid flux and change that it is well-nigh impossible to obtain any clear-cut or stable picture of it. The bewildering progress of science and technology, leading to the progressive regimentation and mechanisation of large parts of individual and social life; the whirlwind spread of new ideologies which overleap national barriers; the increasing inter-dependence of the countries of the world politically, economically and culturally; the insidious or open attempt by the modern State to encroach upon the inalienable rights of its citizens; the collapse of the old social moral values, and the decay of religion are a few of the more striking features of the age. Their cumulative effect is almost overwhelming for the individual man or woman, who, bewildered and without understanding, tends to be swamped by the mass, and to lose sight of the things of the spirit in his difficult pursuit of material prosperity and security. Spiritual and moral values, and mankind's heritage of culture have suffered grievously in modern times. What is left of them can only be preserved, diffused and extended by education of the right sort.

Education has both a quantitative and a qualitative aspect. The former depends on the amount of money available, the buildings, the apparatus, and similar material aids: the latter depends almost entirely on the nature and personality of the teachers in whose hands lies the destiny of the human race. The quality of education in a country and the quality of its culture depend on the quality of its teachers. Text-books, class-rooms and other teaching aids are necessary for a modern teacher, but the greatest and most enduring educative force is the character and personality of the teacher himself. Socrates, one of the greatest teachers who lived had neither a class-room, a text-book nor blackboard to help him: classes were

held in the market-place, and he relied almost entirely on the force of his personality to achieve his ends. A good teacher can communicate the divine spark of learning in a barn, a shallow one will achieve little, even with the latest and most scientific technical aids; and one good teacher can achieve more than a hundred bad or indifferent ones.

In modern society the influence of teachers is much wider than their immediate impact on their pupils; through their work and example they not only help raise cultural and moral standards, but contribute to its economic betterment of society. Indeed the potential and actual contribution of the teacher to the promotion of human happiness and progress cannot be overrated.

This potential contribution is perhaps even greater in times of rapid change, such as those in which we are living, than it has even been in the more stable centuries of the past. "The teacher", it has been well said, "is in a key position. He is there to interpret the past in terms of his own experience and the experience of others and should use it simply in a starting point for journeys of discovery and adventure into the future, in which he will be the guide and inspirer of his charges."

Hence while the problem of finding enough teachers for child population explosion all over the world is a pressing one, a still greater and more urgent necessity is that of finding the right type of teachers. "Schools", states a UNESCO Report, "exist for children and are designed to serve man and society, and not to provide employment for teachers. What is important is the teaching function for this has such potentiality for the promotion of human happiness and progress that its value cannot be overstressed. It is so important that its performance should be entrusted only to those prepared to fulfil it effectively and responsibly, and with pride tempered with humility."

What type of teacher is needed for the schools of today and tomorrow? In view of the dynamic character of the world of today, and the difficulty of predicting what form and shape it will take in that tomorrow for which the children of today have to be educated, it would be disastrous to attempt to lay down hard and fast specifications for the teacher in the



modern world. No cut-and-dried pattern, however admirable, will fill the bill. Still there are certain essential qualities of head and heart which the teacher of today should possess or aspire to; and as a great teacher is both born and made, he should be adequately educated for the most difficult, exacting and delicate vocation in the world, that of helping the children of today to grow to full maturity of body, mind and spirit, so that they may prove worthy and capable citizens of the world of tomorrow in which they will have to live, and the security and progress of which rests in their hands.

The aim of modern education is, to quote Sir John Adams, "to develop a complete personality and many-sided interests". Education in the modern world can no longer be incomplete or fragmentary, aiming at the imparting of instruction only, or the training of the mind only: it must be total education, the co-education of body, mind and spirit. Education is, further, a bi-polar process in which the most important positive influence, after the parents, is that of the teacher. No teacher can give what he has not got, hence it is essential for the modern teacher to be a "full man", in Bacon's use of the expression, a mature and integrated personality, a man of wide and deep culture, and many-sided interests. The word "teacher" no longer rings true in modern times, it suggests too much the pedagogue, the "information-monger" of the past. The teacher of today should be an educator in the fullest sense of the word, and to be this he must be the right type of person. "For work in our schools", says Prof. Jacks, "we need the right type of human being, the right type of teacher will follow". What a teacher is, is much more important than what he teaches, for, in the last analysis, every teacher teaches himself, whether he will or not; and every virtue goes out from him, he will never be a true Mahatma or merit true "disciples".

No standardised type of personality can be laid down for the modern teacher; every personality is in a sense unique, and the "dominating personality" so beloved of the educationists of old does not always achieve the best results. What is important is that the modern teacher's personality should not be cast in a rigid mould, but should be adaptable to changing needs and circumstances. A teacher's personal

growth should not stop short when he gets his first job, he should continue to develop and grow through life, for growth is the determining characteristic of life, and only life can communicate life. A certain dynamic quality and flexibility of personality is necessary in the modern teacher. This does not mean he should be a reed shaken in the wind, or a follower after every new fashion in thinking or living; underlying his adaptability must be an essential integrity of mind and character, based on a sound philosophy of life and work. A satisfactory and satisfying philosophy of life is the best possession of a teacher amid the shifting sands of modern life; without it he will be like a ship without a rudder, and will be in grave danger of suffering shipwreck and carrying his pupils to destruction with him!

The teacher in the modern world can no longer shut himself up in the ivory tower of the school, and live as a "being apart" from his fellows, as one "who is too good (or not good enough?) for human nature's daily food". Such an attempt will soon make him "a man among children and a child among men", and he will merit to the full the late G.B.S' taunt "those who can, do; those who cant, teach". The modern teacher should mix freely with his fellows; he must go forth into the dust and heat of the arena of life in order to understand the world in which he lives and for which he is preparing his pupils.

The school is essentially a community institution and the teacher is the representative of the community, hence he must make vital contact with his fellows, and with the life of the community, if he is to be of real help to the children whom he is educating to live in and for the community. The modern teacher should possess in some measure the spirit and background of a social worker; only then will he be able to extend his influence far outside the walls of his school, and fulfil adequately his natural role as a leader of the community. Education must not only fit a child for the community, but give him the power to influence and change it for the better in order to inspire their pupils to play a creative role in society, teachers must themselves be found in the vanguard of social change and progress.

Such are some of the qualities and tasks of the teacher in

the modern world. To obtain such teachers and educate them to perform their functions is no easy task. "The bravest and best", says an English educationist, "are needed for the schools of today", not the failures, the mercenary, the shallow, and the outcasts! Unless a better class of recruits are attracted to teaching, it will be impossible to turn out the type of teachers needed for the modern world. Such men and women will only be forthcoming if society as a whole recognises the vital role of education, in practice as well as in theory, and if the economic and social status and the material rewards of the profession are commensurate with the teachers' vital role as the nation builders of tomorrow. "Throughout the world", The Kothari Commission observes, "the general experience has been that, as the material rewards of teachers are elevated, it becomes possible to recruit into the profession individuals of a continually improving quality and with more extended professional training; and in proportion as the competence, integrity and dedication has increased, society has been increasingly willing—and justifiably so—to give greater recognition to their material and economic status."

Having secured a steady flow of the right teacher potential, the next task will be to educate them in such a way as to fit them to perform worthily and well their high calling. A wide general education and a sound professional training will provide the foundation on which they can build their personality, interests and professional competence. It must be emphasised, however, that no course of education, however extended or perfect in itself, given at a Training institution can "complete" the education of the modern teacher. Education is a continuous process of development from the cradle to the grave; a modern teacher's education begins at birth, and must end only with his retirement and death, "who drinks of one occupied in learning drinks of the running stream, who drinks of one who has stopped learning, drinks the green water of the stagnant pool". A teacher who stops learning, stops educating, even though he may continue to go through the motions of teaching and to dole out his daily unpalatable, undigested, indigestible and meaningless "lessons" to his long-suffering victims!

A great teacher's influence for good is incalculable; it

extends in ever widening circles, influencing not only his present pupils, but through them generations yet unborn. A bad teacher is a menace to his pupils and to society. We must do everything in our power to ensure that the teachers to whom we entrust the education and upbringing of our children are worthy of the trust and confidence we impose in them. For in their hands lies, to a large extent, not only the future of our children, but the destiny of the nation.



## TOWARDS A PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

A young teacher, being interviewed for his first post, would be rather taken aback if his interviewer asked him to state briefly his philosophy of life and of education. After the mental shock had worn off, his reaction would almost certainly be that the question was unfair and /or irrelevant to his fitness as a teacher, or that his "philosophy", if he had one, was his own private concern! If these objections were overruled, the young teacher would perhaps seek refuge in some vague generality as "My philosophy is to make my students happy," or, if he were more candid, "I did not study the philosophy of education for my B.T.", or "Frankly I do not know," with the silent addition "and couldn't care less"!

And yet the interviewer's question would not only be extremely pertinent, but on the answer given to it should depend in large measure whether the teacher in question gets the job or does not. The late G. K. Chesterton remarked that it was more important for a landlady to know her prospective lodger's philosophy than to see his Bank pass book; by the same token, it is equally, if not more important for a Headmaster or Public Service Commission to know a prospective teacher's philosophy of life and education than to scrutinise his paper qualifications or assess his professional knowledge and skill. A teacher being interviewed may be academically well qualified, his professional expertise may be excellent, but he will never be a real teacher, let alone an educator in the fullest sense of the term, if he has not, besides the Know-How, the Know-Why to guide and sustain him in the difficult, exacting, and responsible vocation he has chosen for his lifework. Hence every teacher worthy of the name should have a conscious (or sub-conscious) philosophy of life and of education if he is to measure up fully to the many-sided challenge of educating the children and youth of today to be the men and women of tomorrow.

Education, stripped of all its accretions is, as we have stated

in the opening sentence of this book, an essentially human affair, the influence of persons on persons. The ultimate objective of education, as Swami Vivekananda insisted, is Man-making—the teacher is not an Information-monger or an Examination-coach but a maker of men, endeavouring to draw out all the latent potentialities of his students, to educate their character, and develop their potentially rich, many-sided personalities. To achieve this goal a good teacher not merely imparts vital knowledge and skills to his pupils, he endeavours to influence their attitudes and shape their values so that they may use their abilities, aptitudes and qualities of mind and heart, not merely to feather their own nests but in the service of their fellow men.

No teacher or educator can give what he has not, hence every teacher has himself to develop his own humanity to the fullest; and in order to be fully human, it is essential for him to have developed the capacity to see life steadily and see it whole, and to understand the precise significance of his life and work and its unique place within the entire scheme of things. A teacher needs bread, and teaching is a job, like any other; but much more so than people in other professions, a teacher cannot live by bread alone, he needs in addition a satisfying and satisfactory philosophy of life and education to provide a frame of reference, a rudder, a motive power and an inspiration for his life-work. Without such a philosophy, a teacher, however competent he may be as a purveyor of information or imparter of skills, will be like a house built on sand, a reed shaken on the wind. For, in the last analysis, what a teacher teaches is not History or Geography or Additional Mathematics or Music, but himself!

What a teacher really teaches is what he is, and what he is determined by what he believes and loves, or his philosophy of life and education. A teacher's philosophy shapes his mind and character and determines largely how he thinks, feels and acts, and, more than any other factor, it will determine the essential quality and character of the teacher's work. Hence it has been well said that "a teacher is an applied philosopher, and that education is the dynamic side of philosophy." Every teacher whether he likes it or not, consciously or sub-consciously has to evolve a philosophy, not so much

for its own sake but for its significance for his life in general, and his work as a teacher in particular, and to serve as a touchstone for everything he believes and does, his aims, choice of content for syllabuses, methods of teaching and evaluation, attitudes and discipline.

Realising the vital importance of a philosophy of education in the life of a teacher, every Training College scheme of studies in India and abroad, whether at the undergraduate or postgraduate level, provides a specific course designed to help potential teachers towards a worthwhile philosophy. This course is variously called, "The Philosophical Bases of Education," or "The Sociological Bases of Education", or more simply "Principles of Education", and it aims to help teachers to conceive the true nature and scope of education, to quote Prof. Godfray Thompson, "to look at education as a whole and try and make as consistent and sensible idea of the whole as possible". Unfortunately, instead of being of positive assistance to future teachers in formulating for themselves a satisfying and satisfactory personal philosophy of life and education, such courses only too frequently do just the opposite—they subject intending teachers to the violent clash of conflicting principles and aims, and not seldom leave them more confused and bewildered at the end of these courses than at the beginning.

The main reason for this sorry state of affairs is that the study of the "Principles" or "Philosophy of Education" is usually treated as a purely academic exercise, an end in itself, rather than a means to assisting the potential teacher to "see life steadily and see it whole" and provide him with a consistent and worthwhile scheme of ideals and values that will give a meaning and purpose to what would otherwise be a mere dissemination of pre-digested and unpalatable information to an unwilling and captive audience.

A second reason why most courses on Principles of Education fail is that these courses generally cover too wide and diffuse a canvas involving, as many of them do, a historical study of differing aims and philosophies of education from Plato and Aristotle to John Dewey, Whitehead and Bertrand Russell, with in India, Gandhi, Tagore and Radhakrishnan thrown in for good measure! Students are expected to survey too

extensive and complex a field in too short a time, such a survey can only result in a very superficial acquaintance with the ideas of the world's leading philosopher-educationists, or a popular digest of the educational principles derived from the great philosophical systems of thought, Materialism, Idealism, Realism, Pragmatism, Existentialism, Humanism—Scientific and Religious—together with an introduction to the philosophical and educational principles underlying the great religions of the world—Buddhism, Hinduism, Mohammedanism and Christianity and Atheistic Communism. Such a study, in width rather than depth, has some value in acquainting teachers with the varying and often diametrically opposed ideas of great educationists, philosophers and religious teachers. But, not infrequently, students find themselves out of their depth and so confused by the welter of conflicting principles and aims that they come to the conclusion that "One philosophy of education is as good, or as bad, as another," or that a teacher should not dabble with such highfalutin notions but get on with his practical humdrum job of instructing boys and girls to pass examinations and thus prepare themselves to earn a good living. Is the study of "the philosophical and sociological bases of education" really of any value for intending teachers? Do teachers really need to have a philosophy of life of education? Students often ask themselves, and occasionally their Professors, when struggling to understand the seminal and disturbing ideas of the great philosophers and educationists. Will not a thorough professional knowledge of the "tricks of the trade" be adequate to enable the teacher to draw out and develop to the fullest possible extent, the abilities and aptitudes of the pupils? Surely the Know-How and Know-What of his job is very much more important than the Know-Why?

There is some force in this viewpoint which is a variation of the eternal Ends Vs Means, or Theory Vs Practice debate that has raged for centuries, not only in the field of education but in other professional fields of life and work. The truth of the matter is, of course, that theory and practice, ends and means, act and react, complement and complete one another, and both are integral parts of a single whole. But in the field of education especially, the theory and the ends of edu-



cation must come first, if for no other reason than that the art and practice of education is best learnt on the job. Intending teachers during their training courses may pick up from their lectures or from demonstration classes a few "tricks of the trade". They will only learn their trade during a lifetime of actual teaching in the class-room. Further, the methods used by teachers are determined ultimately, and even proximately, by their objectives which, in turn, depend on their philosophy of education. Hence both from a short-term and a long-term point of view training courses must give a central place to a study of principles, objectives and values, ends and means. "The main aim of training", says Prof. Curtis, "is to give the learner the right attitude towards his future work. Once his face is turned in the right direction the young teacher will develop his understanding of children and his knowledge of the intricacies of everyday class-room procedures by the very act of teaching. Even the hard practical man has a philosophy. Every person has a philosophy of life and every educator a philosophy of education, even if it is not explicit."

Everything in fact that a teacher does has an aim, even if this aim is vague and exists only in his sub-conscious, and the clearer a teacher is about his aims, and the more conscious he is about the significance and value of what he is doing, the more effective teacher he will be. Real failures in teaching indeed arise more often from lack of conscious, worthwhile objectives than from personal, academic or professional deficiencies. "The really great teachers", to quote Prof. Curtis once again, "are those who have made clear to themselves what they wished to accomplish and who have striven with all the powers at their command to realise their aims. Their wholehearted enthusiasm has been caught by their pupils who have come to desire the same end and have become willing partners in the process of education." When we state therefore that every teacher must have a philosophy of life and of education if he is to be a great teacher, we do not exclude the methods or means he uses to bring his philosophy down from heaven and give it a local habitation and a name in the class-room. Indeed in referring to a teacher's philosophy of life we refer firstly to the supreme purpose that actuates

him in living, and secondly to the means which he uses in his efforts to secure these purposes. Similarly, when we refer to a teacher's philosophy of education, we are referring first of all to his views of the purpose of education in the life of a man, and secondly to the procedures through which he hopes to achieve these purposes.

A consideration of the aims or purposes of education in the life of man, with a view to helping students in training to formulate a satisfactory and satisfying personal philosophy of life and education, must therefore be the most important objective of the "Principles" or "Philosophical bases" of education courses, and the core of the professional education of the future teachers.

Related disciplines like Psychology, Sociology, Economics and Ethics etc. have much to contribute towards the formulation of this philosophy, they can never, by themselves and of themselves, form the basis of a complete and worthwhile philosophy of life and education. This can only be forthcoming if and when students are brought face to face with the ultimate Platonic question "What a man is, and how he must live", personal and deeply-felt answers to which can alone supply these values and attitudes that eventually make up one's philosophy of life and education. Such a philosophy is, as we have repeatedly stressed in this chapter, essential to give teachers a clear conception not only of immediate but of ultimate aims, a scale of values and a faith in the essential worthwhileness and unique importance of their work that will triumph over adverse conditions in the schools, and the monotony of the daily grind, and sustain them amidst the burden of the day and the heat.

What the world in general, and India in particular, most needs and most lacks today, is teachers with a clear and worthy Weltanschauung and philosophy of life and education. If the Training Colleges were asked what they were doing to help their students to acquire "that vital system of ideas by which each age lives", and that "repertory of convictions that becomes the effective guide of his existence" which Prof. Ortega Y. Gasset holds to be essential for a truly educated person, (and doubly essential for a teacher!) their answer would perforce have to be "little or nothing". In the modern world where fundamental human values are being threatened

by the use of new ideologies like Economic Determinism, Materialistic Atheism, Existentialism and various forms of modern Hedonism, it is absolutely important that students should be helped to formulate a satisfying philosophy of life and education. "Most important of all", says Marjorie Reeves in her provocative book *Growing up in a Modern Society*, "we need as teachers people of conviction who have honestly built up their philosophy of life (or are in the process of so doing), and have embraced a faith which is a base of education". This does not mean a complete and static faith, the important thing is to take one's stand somewhere, albeit experimentally, rather than sit for ever on the fence above the conflicts in strict non-commitment, for such an attitude, as Sir Walter Moberly has pointed out, is one of false neutrality.

Commitment to a personal philosophy or scheme of values that shape his life and work is essential for a good teacher. "Worthwhile values when experienced", according to our philosopher-educationist President Dr. Zakir Hussain, "bring with them a characteristic, satisfying sense of validity, permanence and absolute worth. One gets committed to them and strives to realise them. They become determining factors in a person's scheme of life, his structure and scale of values, his desires, his preferences, his motivations. Education in the true sense consists of helping the individual mind to experience those specifically human, objective, moral and spiritual values so that they urge him to get committed to realise them as best as he may in his life and in his work. It is like lighting a lamp which enables one to march forward with sure steps into darkness and gloom. It is education's noblest task to light this lamp in each individual breast."

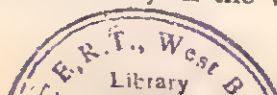
That it is a Training institution's noblest task to light the lamp in the hearts of their students, who will soon be the teachers of tomorrow has been and is being increasingly realised by Teacher educators abroad and also in India. Students in these institutions are also becoming increasingly aware of the need for a philosophy that will give significance and value to the future life work. At a meeting of London University Education Students a few years ago it was agreed that students needed a wider conception of education than they are given in most "Principles of Education" courses,

that what they wanted was a basis of philosophical belief on which to form their philosophy of life and education; for this philosophy, implicit or explicit, they felt, was bound to influence the relations with the children they educated. In this connection the author vividly remembers the conversation he had with a Training College student in Bristol during which he said, among other things, that he would consider his period of training a success if it helped him to formulate a working philosophy of life and education that would give meaning and significance to his future work, and a failure if it did not.

Training College students in India, especially at the post-graduate level would, if they were as alive and articulate, be in substantial agreement with this view, more especially as most Indians have a fundamentally religious view of the world and of life, irrespective of whether they are Hindus, Mohammedans, Buddhists, Sikhs or Christians. If teachers both in India and abroad in our modern, largely scientific, technological and individualistic age have not achieved all they wished to achieve or could have achieved, and if, especially in India, they have failed to stem the "crisis of character" in the student world, it is mainly because their Training Courses have not helped them to develop the right standards, values, motives and incentives to bring out the best in them and to stimulate them to bring out the best in their students. In this connection the wise words of the University Education Commission are worth quoting and remembering "The civilised people of the world wonder as to why intelligence and education do not bring peace and order, as to why democratic constitutions do not bring democracy, why religion does not bring brotherhood.

One reason is that with professional men (and teachers especially, who hold a key position in modern society), professional education has failed in one of its large responsibilities, that of developing overall principles and philosophy by which professional men should live and work."

The failure must be remedied in the immediate future, at least with regard to teachers, the nation-builders and world-builders of tomorrow, if the world is to survive, and if peace and harmony and the brotherhood of men, under Fatherhood of God, is to become a reality in the world.









cil Visitorship to England for six weeks to study at first hand the latest developments in educational theory and practice in the United Kingdom.

Mr. D'Souza has made excellent use of his wide and deep background of the latest theory and practice of education, and of his enviable experience of educational systems in India and abroad, in the writing of this book into which he has infused the essence of his personal and professional philosophy of education.

*The Training of Teachers in England and India, Aspects of Education in India and Abroad and Further Aspects of Education in India and Abroad are his outstanding publications.*

## THE HUMAN FACTOR IN EDUCATION

No matter how ancient their cultural roots, all developing communities passing through a technological revolution are inevitably pressed to gear educational planning to their economic welfare. For we live in a world where it is both inevitable and right to use the resources of science and the machine to eliminate the dehumanizing plague of poverty. The danger of this situation lies in the ease with which our educational resources can become totally engaged in the achievement of economic objectives. Imperceptibly we tend to merge into an electronic world in which the computer and the machine, and maybe the nuclear bomb, not human intelligence and wisdom, decide our destiny. In this situation education becomes the servant solely of utilitarian purposes. This is true of all national communities, rich or poor. We are endangering the existence of human values implicit in our highest educational traditions, depriving them "of the missing component of the heart".

With this grim possibility in mind readers of *The Human Factor in Education* will find in Mr. D'Souza's book both a warning and the outlines of an opportunity. In reading it I have been impressed by the breadth of its scope, the universality of its application, the warm humanity of the author's outlook and the wisdom and practicality of his proposals. He reminds us that no one engaged at any point in the educational process can afford to neglect the human factor, the I-THOU relationship which gives life to any human institution. Whether at the administrative level of planning or in the intimate contracts within the school community, it is people who matter.

Mr. D'Souza writes with an intimate knowledge of school problems as they confront the teacher and also with a compassionate understanding of the ultimate issue—that the aim of education is not to make gadgets but men. I commend this book to teachers to parents and to those who plan education. All will profit from its wisdom.